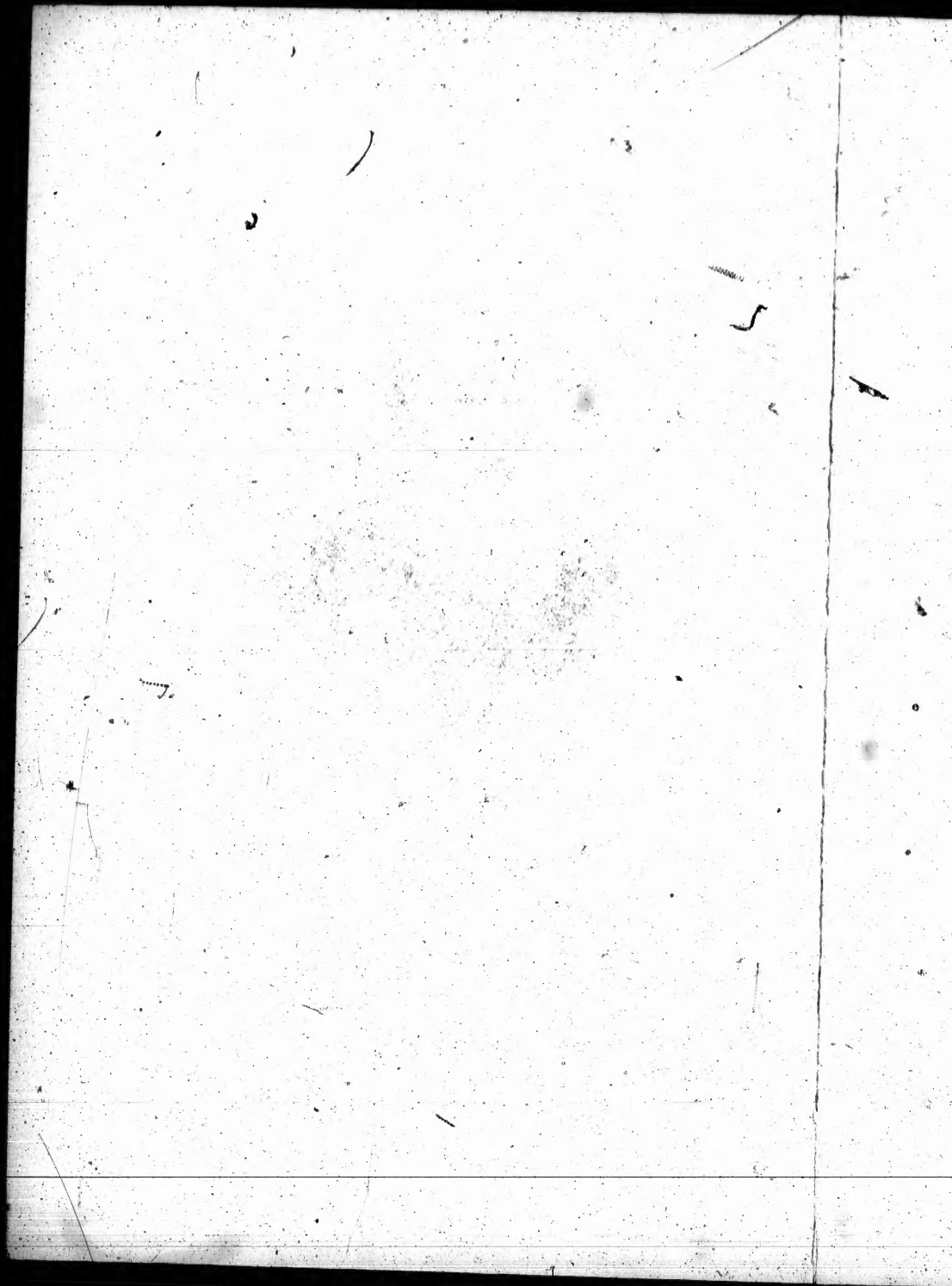




yours truly
Charles Garrett

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LOVING COUNSELS:

Sermons and Addresses.

BY THE

REV. CHARLES GARRETT.

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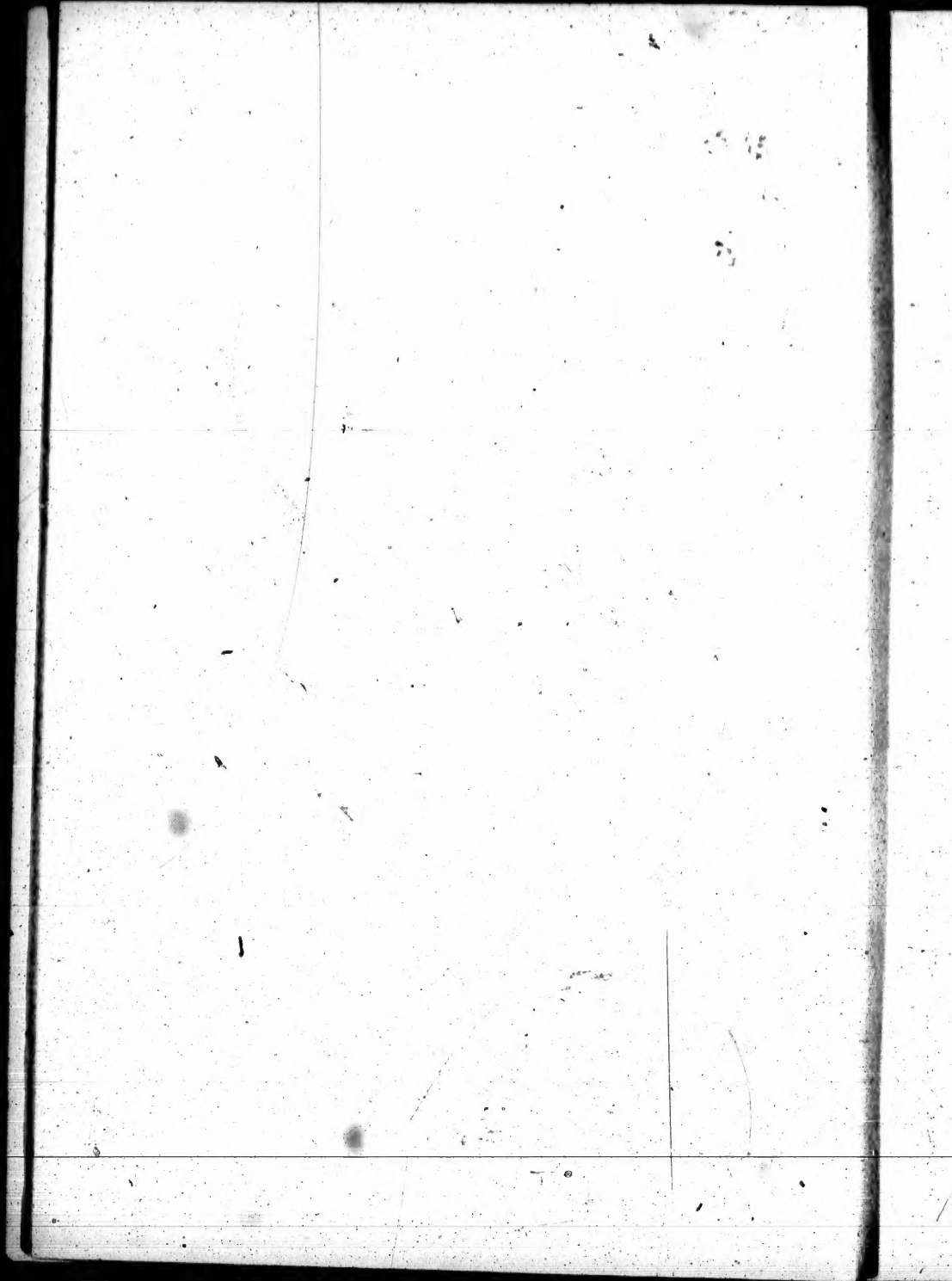
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ENTERED, according to Act of the Parliament of Canada, in the year one thousand eight hundred and eighty-seven, by WILLIAM BRIGGS, Book Steward of the Methodist Book and Publishing House, Toronto, at the Department of Agriculture.

To my Wife.



PREFACE.

MINE has been such a busy life that I have had no time for what are called literary pursuits. My sermons and speeches have been thought out, as I best could, but they have not been written. Hundreds of them have been reported, and published in newspapers and in other ways; and from these I have selected the contents of this volume. Many of my friends have expressed the wish that I would publish something that they could read when my voice shall no longer be heard; and I have yielded to their request. May the printed words be more useful than they were when they were spoken!

LIVERPOOL, November 22, 1836.

V
X
X
X
X
X
XV
XVI
X
X
X
XX

CONTENTS.

	PAGE
I. FAITHFUL STEWARDSHIP	1
II. GOD WITH US, AS WITH OUR FATHERS	29
III. AN OLD PROMISE FOR THE NEW YEAR	43
IV. HOW TO ENSURE A HAPPY NEW YEAR	51
V. THE CHRISTIAN'S JOYOUS KNOWLEDGE	63
VI. RELIGION BETTER THAN LIFE	73
VII. THE ACCEPTED CALL	81
VIII. THE THRONE OF GRACE	94
IX. ZEAL FOR GOOD WORKS	104
X. THE NEW SONG	129
XI. PREPARE YE THE WAY OF THE LORD	142
XII. SAVE THE CHILDREN	161
XIII. THE FAITHFUL SERVANT AND HIS REWARD	176
XIV. "A GOOD SOLDIER OF JESUS CHRIST"	206
XV. VALEDICTORY ADDRESS TO THE STUDENTS OF THE WEST- MINSTER AND SOUTHLANDS COLLEGE, DELIVERED DECEM- BER 19, 1882	221
XVI. STOP THE GAP!	231
XVII. OUR NATIONAL DRINK BILL FOR 1884, AND WHAT WE HAVE FOR IT	246
XVIII. THE RELATIONSHIP OF THE SUNDAY SCHOOL TO THE BAND OF HOPE	267
XIX. TEMPERANCE ADDRESS IN CORNWALL	277
XX. ADDRESS AT THE ECUMENICAL CONFERENCE OF THE METHODIST CHURCH	289
XXI. THE SUNDAY DRINK TRAFFIC	296
XXII. THE INFLUENCE OF THE DRINKING CUSTOMS UPON THE WORK OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH	307

I.

FAITHFUL STEWARDSHIP.¹

MY DEAR YOUNG BRETHREN, I heartily sympathize with you in the event of to-day. To you this day will stand out from all the other days of your life. It is a day to which you have long looked forward with prayerful anxiety, and on which you will look back with solemn interest to all eternity. I am exceedingly anxious to do all in my power to make the day a blessing to all the other days of your existence. In order to this, I want to give you a little advice—advice taught me by God's Word, and my own experience. I wish to take, as my guide in this work, the second verse in the fourth chapter of the First Epistle to the Corinthians—

“It is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful.”

I. *Note the office you sustain—“Stewards of the Mysteries of God.”*

The work of the ministry is so comprehensive, and important, and honourable, that no one word is sufficient to describe it. Hence a variety of names are employed, each having some special meaning, and thus giving new light as to its duties. Ministers are spoken of as “Men of God,” as “Labourers,” as “Builders,” as “Fishers,” as “Watchmen”—here, and in other parts of Scripture, they are spoken of as

¹ A Charge delivered at the Ordination of sixty-three young Ministers in the Kingston Chapel, Hull.

"Stewards." A Steward is a person who is employed to take charge of the property of another; and I am anxious to impress upon your minds the fact that this is the office you sustain. You are not proprietors, dealing with that which is your own, and therefore having a right to use it as you please; you are stewards, dealing with that which belongs to God, and therefore bound to deal with it in all things according to His pleasure. To this office you cannot appoint yourself, nor can you be appointed by your fellow-servants. A steward can only be appointed to the office by the proprietor. "No man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God." This call you have had. Those around you heard not the voice, and when you spoke of it first, perhaps, like Eli with Samuel, they doubted. With you, however, there was no doubt. The voice was clear and distinct, and you had no choice but to obey. You said, "Woe is me if I preach not the Gospel." You then offered yourself to the Church, but so anxious were we that we should not recognise one whom God had not called, that you were met at every step with the solemn question—"Do you believe that God has called you to this work?" This question has been put for the last time before this congregation, and in the presence of earth and heaven, of God and man, you have answered, "I trust so." With this declaration we are satisfied, and we have in the most solemn way avowed our satisfaction. We have not laid hands suddenly upon you, but have taken every possible precaution, and employed every possible test, to prevent mistake. And now our part is done. Your declaration we unhesitatingly receive, and we greet you as our fellow-stewards in this glorious and important trust. We in the most solemn and formal manner possible recognise your appointment to this high office, and we welcome you into our ranks. Henceforth you are to be known as "men of God," as men consecrated, and set apart,

for the service of God, and humanity. You are now God's special property, and you are henceforth to devote all your time, and talents, and powers, to His service. It is to be your life work. In the sunny morning of youth, the sultry noon of manhood, and amid the shadows of old age, you are to be the stewards of the Most High God. We give you our greetings, our sympathy, our prayers; but the grace to be faithful must be obtained from Him whom you serve. You believe it to be the will of your Divine Master that you should be employed in the Methodist branch of His Church. You have studied its doctrines, and polity, and are satisfied that they are in harmony with the teaching of God's Word, and you have, after much thought and prayer, felt it to be God's will that you should offer yourselves for the work of the ministry in the Methodist Church. After much examination and prayer, the Church has received you. You are now Methodist ministers; and a higher position you cannot have this side heaven.

God has done His part. We have done ours. See that you do yours.

II. *The Charge with which you are entrusted.*

It is of supreme importance that you should accurately ascertain the nature and extent of the trust committed to your care. Without this it will be impossible for you to know your duty, or to understand your responsibility. It is clear that you have a trust beyond that committed to ordinary Christians. As Christians you are admitted into Christ's army; as ministers you are officers in that army: as Christians you have to take heed to yourselves; as ministers you have to care for others. It is a high honour, but it brings with it great responsibility.

A steward will not only make himself thoroughly acquainted with the trust committed to his care, but he will carefully examine the directions under which he is to act

His one constant, guiding, question will be, What is the will of the proprietor? and when that question is answered, he has no choice but to render prompt obedience. What then, I ask, is the trust which is committed to your care? It is clear that in many respects your gifts will differ, and that you will be called to a variety of work. There is no monotony in any of God's works, and there is none in the ministry. When we read what our divine Master said about the stewardship, we are told that one had one talent, another two, and another five. The Apostle Paul, in his letter to the Ephesians, says that God "gave some apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers; and that this variety was for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, and for the edifying of the body of Christ." In his letter to the Corinthians he dwells upon this variety, saying that there were diversities of gifts; that one was pre-eminent for wisdom; another for knowledge; another for faith; another for the gift of preaching; another for the working of miracles; another for prophecy, and so on. And then he goes on to say that God has set some in the Church—first, apostles; secondarily, prophets; thirdly, teachers; after that, miracles; then, gifts of teaching; helps, governments, diversity of tongues; and warns us against expecting every gift in all. That some were to be remarkable for one talent, and some for another, and that God qualifies every man for the special work he is called to do. It is important that you should ever bear this in mind, to lead you to ascertain the nature of the gift that is in you, and to prevent your being discouraged because you cannot do the work that others are doing. It should also be borne in mind by the people, that they may not form unreasonable expectations respecting you, but that they may derive all possible benefit from the varied blessings which God designs you to convey.

Having thus reminded you that you are not alike, but

that you differ in your ability, and therefore in the work to which you will be assigned, I turn to the trust committed to your care—the special trust committed to you as ministers, and as ministers in the Methodist Church.

First, There is THE GLORIOUS GOSPEL. God has said to each of you, "Go thou and preach the Gospel." You are to hear the word from God's mouth, and declare it to the people. You are to speak as the oracles of God. You may each say with the Apostle Paul, "The glorious Gospel of the blessed God is committed to my trust," "a dispensation of the Gospel is committed unto me." This is a high honour, but it brings with it tremendous responsibilities. You are to give yourselves to the Word of God, and to prayer. Take care that you do it. "Give yourselves *wholly* to it, that you may save yourselves, and them that hear you." As Wesleyan ministers, you have a full Gospel to preach, you have no limit either as to its extent, or its power. You know that it is "glad tidings of great joy for all people," and that it can "save to the uttermost." See that you preach it always, and everywhere. You cannot go to the wrong place, and you cannot meet with the wrong man. Go then as "the messengers of the Churches, and the glory of Christ," and wherever you go, deliver your glorious message. Don't be tempted to any inferior work. If science, or philosophy, or politics, invite your attention, tell them that you are doing a greater work, and therefore cannot come down to them. Tell them that though they can do many important things in their inferior sphere, that they cannot save a soul, or purify a heart, or make a sinner meet for heaven; but that you have that which can do it all: that the Gospel you preach is the power of God unto salvation. Take care therefore that you preach the Gospel. Don't offer stones when sent with the bread of life. Preach the Gospel; not half the Gospel, or some phase of the Gospel merely, but the whole Gospel, and not the Gospel and something else

darkening your counsel by words without wisdom; but tell all men, everywhere, that you bring them "glad tidings of great joy," that God is in Christ, able, willing, waiting, longing, to save them all. In order to this, study God's Word carefully; be men of one book. Let the Bible be your central sun; see that you know it well. Value other books only as they help you to understand this—be like the early Methodist preachers, mighty in the Scriptures. Meditate upon it day and night—study it on your knees—get at the hidden meaning—let the secret of the Lord be with you, the power from on high—honour God's Word, and He will honour you.

Preach it *earnestly*. Saved yourselves, let it be the business of your life to save others. Let yours be no official life, no perfunctory service. A cold, dull, merely intellectual sermon, is out of place in any pulpit, but especially in ours. Think of the interests involved in the right discharge of your duty. Think of the value of the soul—of its peril—of its possibilities of agony, and of bliss. Think of the multitudes around you who never open a Bible, or bend a knee, or breathe a prayer. Think of the hell to which they are hastening, of the heaven which is open to receive them. Think of what Christ has done to make their salvation possible; of the anxiety of God for their salvation; of the presence, and marvellous work, of the Holy Spirit, to lead them to come to Christ, and heaven. See heaven open, and hell open; try to realize the fearful position of those to whom you are speaking, and let your eyes affect your heart. Be miserable if souls are not saved. Give God no rest till He clothes you with salvation; and when you enter the pulpit,

"Preach as if you ne'er would preach again,
And as a dying man to dying men."

Preach it *tenderly*. This is involved in what I have just said; but I want to impress it upon you, because I

am quite sure that your acceptability, and success, will greatly depend upon it. I have heard men speak of God's love, and the sinner's danger, as if they were mere talking machines, and not living men. Guard against this. I know there is a great deal of difference in your mental constitution. That some are naturally cold, and stolid, while others are naturally warm, and emotional; but grace must conquer nature—God can take away the stony heart, and give a heart of flesh. If you are of a stolid temperament, conquer it. Get the mind of Christ—catch the spirit of the great apostle who wept as he wrote, and spoke, of sinners. Reveal their danger to sinners, not in anger, nor controversially, but with quivering voice, and tears of sympathy; as those who see their danger, and know their value. Don't speak as if you were of another race, or as if you were a judge, and they the criminals; but speak as one just rescued from the same peril, and who has come to tell them the way of escape. Let your congregation feel that you are one of themselves, and that you understand their position, their longings, their sins, and their sorrows—that you sympathize with them in the struggle in which they are engaged, and that it is your highest joy to speak to them a cheering word, or to lend them a helping hand.

Preach it *constantly*. Give yourselves wholly to your work. As I have already hinted, you will often be tempted to turn aside from it. Literature in its various forms will tempt some of you; science will hold out its prizes to others; and the lecture-hall will attract not a few. You will be appealed to on every side; the tempter may even come as an angel of light. If you yield to the temptation, you may gain popularity, and fame, and worldly recompense, but you will be shorn of your strength, and thus have to pay a heavy penalty. I have rarely known or heard of a minister yielding to these temptations, who kept his spiritual power, or retained his wisdom to win

souls. I say, therefore, with all the earnestness of my soul, reject the temptation. If you were not a minister it would be another thing, but God has called you to a nobler work. If the apostle thought "it was beneath him to leave the Word of God, and serve the tables on which provision was made for the Christian widows; we ought not to leave the Word of God, and the proclamation of the Gospel, to gratify our tastes, or to win the applause of a thoughtless multitude. In saying this, I do not refer to what you may do as a relaxation, or under special circumstances, but I do say there is no work out of heaven so glorious as that to which you are called. There is no work so profitable, so blessed, so improving to yourselves, so beneficial to others, so pleasing to God, as preaching the Gospel. To this work God has called you, for this work He has qualified you, to this work the Church has invited you, to this work you have pledged yourselves, and I pray you do not abandon it. Determine to know nothing among men, but Jesus Christ, and Him crucified.

Especially, don't forget that you are Methodist preachers, and that we have a good reason for our existence. While holding all the great fundamental doctrines of the Catholic Church, God seems to have raised us up to testify to the universality of His redeeming love, and the infinite power of the Holy Ghost to renew, and sanctify the soul. I know, and rejoice to know, that many in all the orthodox Churches, have been led to receive, and enjoy, these doctrines; yet there are many who question them, and not a few who deny them altogether. You must therefore see that on these points your trumpet gives a certain sound. Let your congregations know that God loves them all, that Christ has died for them all, and that the Holy Ghost is present to renew, and sanctify them all; deliver the old message, with the old power, and you may rely on seeing the same results. You are received

to do a certain work, in a certain way; see that you do it. You are henceforth not free to choose. Beware of any mental reservation. You are a Methodist preacher, and you are bound, therefore, as long as you bear that name, clearly, and distinctly, to preach the doctrines which we profess.

The second part of your trust is THE CHURCH. I use this word in the widest possible sense, for by it I mean the people over whom you are placed from year to year; and by the people, I mean not only the members of Society, but all who are in any degree associated with the chapels and preaching places, in the various Circuits to which you are appointed. You were told in the ordination service that you are called "to teach, and to premonish, to feed, and to provide, for the Lord's family; to seek for Christ's sheep that are dispersed abroad, and for His children who are in the midst of this naughty world, that they may be saved through Christ for ever." For the good of these people you are to live and labour, and I want to give you a few suggestions to guide you in your work.

First, give yourself heart and soul to *the work of preaching*. As Wesleyan ministers you are called especially to be *preachers*. Some other of the Churches have an elaborate ritual, and the sermon occupies an inferior place; but it is not so with us, and I trust it never will be. In most of our chapels our modes of worship are very simple, and the success of the service depends on our power in prayer, and our power as preachers. As preachers our fathers won their position among the Churches, and as preachers we must retain it. Let it be your business to excel in this. Get into the habit of sermon-making. Keep it ever before you. Let it be your central object. Read for it; think for it; visit for it; pray for it; and make everything tributary to it. Always have a sermon on hand; don't be content with the work of the past. The itinerancy offers a strong temptation to this, and the tempta-

tion is increased by the multitude of duties incident to our Circuit arrangements. Too old to this temptation is to sink, and fail. The continued repetition of a sermon, from which the life has departed, is an injury to ourselves, and a wrong to the people to whom we minister. One of our wealthy men offered me £500 for the Ministers' Rest Fund if I could persuade all the ministers to burn their old sermons, and begin afresh. This can hardly be done, but making new sermons will wonderfully reinvigorate the old ones. See to it that your sermons be characterized by variety, freshness, and life. If you make the Bible your storehouse, you will easily succeed in this. Look at the Puritans, and at our Methodist forefathers, and you will find this gloriously illustrated. They breathed an atmosphere of Scripture, and it pervaded all their thoughts and words. Their sermons throb with Biblical life. You will find that attention to visiting will greatly assist you in this work. The variety of experience that you will meet with, will suggest a constant variety of subjects, while illustrations, full of point and beauty, will be presented in abundance. Don't forget Mr. Wesley's advice to his preachers, "Do not be too loud." Loud preaching is always a mistake; it exhausts the preacher, and does not benefit the congregation. Be thoroughly in earnest, but husband your strength; and remember that it is not the thunder, but the lightning, that does the execution. One of the first plans I remember had at the bottom of the list of preachers, a verse that had in it a whole system of elocution—

"Begin low, rise slow; take fire, rise higher."

Another part of Mr. Wesley's advice is, "*Do not be too long.*" This also is good advice. Long preaching is a weariness to the people, and an injury to the preacher. If you are not in earnest, the sooner you stop the better; and if you are

in earnest, long preaching is slow suicide. Half an hour in the morning, and three-quarters of an hour at night, is, as a rule, as much as the people want, and as much as you ought to give.

If you wish the Church over which you are placed to prosper, conscientiously keep your appointments, especially your preaching appointments. You will have, now and then, to visit and help other Circuits, but do it as seldom as possible. Comets serve a purpose, but the planets are more valuable to the mariner; and, as a rule, you will find that the Church prospers more under the care of those who carefully keep to their own work, than it does under the ministry of those who are ever on the wheels. The longing of our people for strangers in the pulpit, is an unhealthy result of the itinerancy, and it is wise in all of us to check it as much as possible. In order to this, always give your people your best. Never trifle with, or despise, a congregation. They be few, and poor, and uneducated, but they are a part of the Church over which the Holy Ghost has made you overseer, and He is ever present to see how you discharge your duty.

Pastoral visiting is another part of your duty—a duty that is only second to the preaching of the Gospel. The want of this is widely felt, and you should give yourselves to it most religiously. Whatever you may do beside, you can never be a faithful steward if you neglect this; and if you attend to it faithfully, I can promise you a successful career, and a glorious reward. I know that unreasonable expectations are entertained as to what you can do in this matter. Our people sometimes expect us to visit as much as a Congregational, or Episcopalian, minister. They forget that they have the class-meeting, of which others know nothing; that the clergyman often gives sermonets, while you are expected to give sermons; that you have a much wider area to cover; that you do meet them quarterly, for

directly spiritual counsels and advice, and that it is the business of the class-leader to see them every week, and to report to you any special need for a pastoral visit; and that, therefore, nothing can be more minute than the spiritual oversight insured in Methodism, if its rules are properly carried out. But while admitting all this, there is still a great, and profitable, work to be done in this direction.

Some of you will be appointed to country Circuits, and a better appointment for body, and soul, you cannot have. It is in these Circuits that pastoral attention is especially needed. In many of our villages there is a widespread and determined effort being made to exterminate Methodism. Local influence, and ecclesiastical power, are being combined to make religious liberty impossible. Methodism is being misrepresented, and denounced; and Methodists who are true to their principles are exposed to a species of boycotting as complete as the ability of the men who employ it. These people have to fight a battle of which townsmen know nothing. Have they no claim upon us? and do we owe them no service? About this there can be no question. How then can this service be rendered? certainly not by hurrying in by train, preaching a brief sermon, and hurrying out again. There must be sacrifice and self-denial. We must give the people careful pastoral oversight—not one must be overlooked. I trust that, at all costs, you will resolve to maintain the Methodism which our fathers laboured and suffered so much to create; and that you will so care for the villages, that tyranny and bigotry will be defeated, and religious liberty maintained to the latest generations. If we forsake the villages God will forsake us. This rests mainly with you, and I trust you will realize your responsibility, and seek grace to be faithful.

Others of you will be called to labour in the large towns

and cities, and here other evils will present themselves, but I trust you will prove equal to the work demanded of you.

In the work of visitation you have much to encourage and help you. In the first place, our people *expect* to be visited; hence every Methodist door is open to you, and every Methodist family is waiting to welcome you. Others have to win the confidence of those among whom they move. With you it is not so; your ordination to-day, and your continued recognition by this Conference, gives you free access to all our people. When you enter the Circuit every Methodist knows you are come, and every boy, and girl, and servant, in a Methodist home, is expecting your appearance. This is an immense privilege, and I pray you see that it be not neglected. If the Great Head of the Church has thus opened your way, see that you walk in it. If He has thus rendered the people accessible, see that you be their wise and diligent pastor. A second advantage which you possess, is your freedom from dependence upon any individual. You will be supported by the whole people, and your support will be guaranteed to the end of your life. Methodism has no prizes to offer, and no blanks from which to shrink. As long as you are faithful, you will be sure of a Circuit. This will give you an independence which is of great value. See then that with these advantages you give yourselves heartily to your work. By pastoral care, I do not mean a mere formal visit to a family. I mean that freedom from clerical iciness—that friendliness, that accessibleness, which characterized your Divine Master, and His apostles, and which distinguished the early Methodist preachers. Live so that, like the apostles, your very shadow falling upon men may be a benediction. Have a look of recognition, a kindly grasp of the hand, a word of cheer, or sympathy, for all your people. Condescend to men of low estate and re-

member you are never more like your Master than when you are thus doing.

But while I say this, I also say, let there be, wherever needed, the formal visit. Divide the town, or district, into subdivisions; enter the names, and addresses, of those you have access to; leave nothing to memory, or accident. Then visit them regularly, though it may be only once a quarter, and make an entry of the date of each visit; this will enable you to satisfy your conscience, and to silence the complaints of unreasonable men. *Be sure and visit your occasional hearers*; let them see that if they don't acknowledge you, you acknowledge them. To no class will your visits be more welcome, and to none will they be more profitable. The husband, who rarely comes to chapel, will prize the visit you pay to his wife, and children, and every visit will be a new bond to bind him to you, and to the Church you represent. *Care also for those who did run well, but whom something has hindered.* The saddest item in our Methodist returns, is the column headed "Ceased to meet." The history of many of the names recorded there would wring the heart with anguish, or crimson the cheek with shame. Many of them are lost, I fear, through ministerial neglect, and not a few through ministerial unwisdom. These cases are sometimes difficult to deal with, and "you will have need to have all your wits about you;" but you must make the attempt. Keep carefully from being mixed up with old quarrels; let them know that your only object is their welfare. Many of them have lost their religion, and as the result, they have lost all relish for our social means of grace. Theirs is a case of unutterable grief, and you must seek after them with all seeking. No matter what the cause of their leaving us have been, they are lost sheep, and you, as their shepherd, are bound to spare no pains for their recovery. Think of their sorrows, of their peril, of their misery—care for

them tenderly, continuously, prayerfully—and who knows but that you may give joy to Heaven, by bringing the prodigal back to his father?

Care also for the Children. You may not have any natural inclination for this work, but you are bound to do it if you would be successful in your stewardship. I am satisfied that the children of Methodism have been greatly neglected. It is one of our weak places—a weak place, almost necessarily resulting from our organization. A stationary minister knows his lambs, and is known of them. He offers them to God in baptism, and is the guide of their youth. He is in close, and tender, relationship to them, at the most sensitive, and impressionable, age; and, as the natural result, they grow up with a love and reverence for him that they cannot give to strangers. We have to sacrifice a great deal of this for the invaluable blessing of the itinerancy. But still our interest, and duty, should lead us to endeavour to minify this disadvantage to the smallest possible degree. Get to know the children of your people, go out of the way to show sympathy with them. Interest yourselves in their amusements, and employments. Talk to them about their reading, help them in their difficulties, and encourage them in every possible way to regard you as their friend.

Be sure and hold in all your Circuits a Saturday afternoon children's meeting. Make it interesting; have plenty of singing, and don't keep them long. If there is a Day-school in your Circuit, visit it regularly. Let the children feel that it is a Methodist establishment. In this way you will secure the interest of the children, and every right-minded teacher will give you a hearty welcome.

Give special attention to the Sunday schools. You will find this of great advantage; visit them as often as possible, and prepare your addresses carefully. If you can secure the attention of children, you will never fail with adults.

That is the place to make you master of your subject, to prune and strengthen your style, and to prepare you for other, and what may be more attractive work.

Care for the poor; many of these are rich in faith, but they have many temporal privations and disadvantages. They are, however, Christ's representatives, and it is at the peril of His frown if they be neglected or overlooked.

Above all, and before all, care for the sorrowing and suffering. Their claim upon you is supreme. Don't wait to be invited; the knowledge of their sorrow and suffering is a sufficient invitation. The more spontaneous your visit, the more welcome it will be. Make everything give way to this—your pleasure, your friendships, your tastes, your studies, your Sundays' sermons, all must bow to this. And when you enter the scene of sorrow, do it tenderly, as a minister of Christ. If you can do anything to alleviate the sorrow, never spare yourself, or your time. It may be the kindly word will be enough, but it may be the helping hand will be needed; if so, give it cheerfully, remembering that your reward is in heaven.

Take hold also of all agencies that will help you to accomplish your work. Despise nothing, undervalue nothing, and seek to profit by the experience of those who have gone before you. Your one object is to glorify God and bless your fellow-men. Whatever will do this you should welcome and assist. Help all local organizations for the benefit of the people. Some of our ministers have allowed their modesty to keep them from taking their right place in these benevolent movements, and Methodism has suffered as the result. Identify yourselves with the Bible Society, the Tract Society, the Societies for benefiting soldiers, and sailors. Especially, for your own sakes, and for the sake of your people, use all your influence for the destruction of the national sin of Intemperance. You will meet with

its terrible effects wherever you go. It has dragged the preacher from the pulpit, and the member from the pew. Its history, like the roll of the prophet, is written within and without, with mourning, lamentation, and woe. If you gain the confidence of your people, you will find that every Circuit has its histories, that will make you tremble and weep. As Methodist preachers, you are bound not to ignore this crying sin. Mr. Wesley in this, as in most other things, set us an excellent example. He was the foremost Temperance reformer of his day. Though not an abstainer, living as he did a hundred years before the introduction of total abstinence, he lived up to the light he had, and was far in advance of his contemporaries. He denounced the evil of drunkenness wherever he went, and did all in his power to rescue its victims from its destructive thralldom. He warned the members, and ministers, of his Societies, against the danger of using spirituous liquors, and he besought them for their own sakes, and the sake of others, never to use them except for medicinal purposes. Thus by his teaching, and example, he did all in his power to destroy this terrible evil. I pray you to go and do likewise. For my own part I have found it to be an immense advantage to be an Abstainer. It has benefited my health, it has increased my happiness, and it has greatly widened my sphere of usefulness. It has shielded me from temptation, and danger, and it has enabled me to rescue many of those who were wounded and fallen. It has blessed me, and made me a blessing, and believing that you want to live to the best possible purpose, I heartily, and confidently, recommend it to you.

Begin your work as soon as you enter the Circuit. If you stay your full time you will find that your three years are soon gone. The demands upon you will be so many, that if you are not prompt, and decided, you will find the term filled up with profitless good intentions.

Besides, you will find the first months of your residence in a Circuit specially valuable as a seed time. An old preacher, when I was entering the ministry, cheered me by saying—"You need not fear to go to any Circuit to which you are appointed, for I have noticed that all the preachers are popular till Christmas." There is a great deal in this, and it shows the immense importance of your seizing the precious weeks in which everybody is believing you to be pre-eminently suited for their requirements, in order that, before the frost of prejudice can harden the soil, you may sow the good seed of the kingdom. Don't heed the cynics who talk about new brooms sweeping clean. Tell them that you have learnt to strike while the iron is hot, and to sail when the wind, and tide, are favourable. I know that all this will be a heavy tax upon your time, and strength. But I take it for granted that you have not entered the ministry for "a morsel of bread," or for social position, or that you may live a life of learned leisure. If you have, you have done a deed that might make a demon tremble. An idle minister is a monster that should be hooted from Society. An idle minister is a criminal against whom God's fiercest anger will blaze in the great day of His coming. But, brethren, I am persuaded better things of you. You have entered our ranks "to do the work of the ministry." You are sensible of the high honour which is conferred upon you, but you are also tremblingly sensible of the tremendous responsibility which is laid upon you; you feel that

" 'Tis not a work of small import
The pastor's care demands;
But work to fill an angel's heart,
And filled the Saviour's hands."

See, then, that you set about this work in a right spirit and in a right way. See that your time is rightly divided and rightly employed. Don't drift: steer, and row. Have

a purpose, and work on a plan. You will find that there is a wonderful harmony in your work, if you go about it in a right way. One kind of work will greatly help the other. Your social work, if done for Christ, as it must be if it is done well, will greatly help the spiritual; your visiting will greatly aid your preaching; and your preaching will wonderfully open your way to the homes, and hearts when you visit. Thus, warning every man, and teaching every man, you may hope at last to present every man perfect in Christ.

III. *The expectation that is entertained respecting you.*
 "It is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful."

This is a most solemn, and yet encouraging thought. It shows us that God is not a hard Master. That nothing unreasonable is expected of you. That you are not responsible for anything that you do not possess. That you are not expected to make bricks without straw. That God does not expect every man to do the same work, but that every man is called, and qualified, to do a certain work, and that God expects him to do it. That we are not to judge one another, nor measure ourselves by others; but try to do our own work, and leave our fellow-servants to their own Master.

It also shows us that we are not responsible for the results of our work, but for doing that work well. The agricultural labourer is responsible for the ploughing and sowing, but never for the crop; he may be bitterly disappointed at the failure of the harvest, but no one would think of uttering a word of blame. And so with the minister: he may faithfully discharge his duties, and yet have a scanty harvest; but no one would think of censuring him; he has been faithful, and God requires no more. While, however, there is a cheering side to this declaration, it has a teaching full of solemnity. While it shows us that

God does not expect us to be some one else, it shows that He does expect us to make the best of *ourselves*. That while He does not hold us responsible for what we have not received, He does hold us responsible for the right use of all we *have* received. I therefore with all possible earnestness would remind you each that you are expected to be *faithful*. In order to this, do your best to fit yourself for your great work; an imperfect instrument can never do a perfect work, and the work to which you are called is so delicate, and so important, that the most perfect instrument is needed for its successful accomplishment. Make the best of yourselves. You have said to God and the Church,

"Take my soul and body's powers,
Take my memory, mind, and will,
All my goods and all my hours,
All I know, and all I feel,"

and God, and the Church, have accepted you. See that you do not go back from your offer. Do not lie unto God or His Church. Let the warning history of Ananias, and Sapphira, startle you into constant watchfulness. You are free agents: you have made this offer, not hurriedly, but after due and prayerful consideration. I, therefore, in the name of God and His Church charge you to be faithful. In order to this "*take heed to yourselves*."

Take care of your *body*. Good health is indispensable to the successful discharge of your work; and your health is, to a large extent, under your own control. Eat simple food—the plainer the better. Beware of being men given to appetite. High living feeds fleshly lusts, and fleshly lusts war against the soul. Get as much good fresh air as you can. Walk to your appointments as often as possible. It will give you a feeling of independence, and afford you an opportunity for meditation, and face to face communion with God, such as you can get in no other

way. Physical exercise is indispensable for vigorous health. It is to the neglect of this that we may trace the nervousness, and dyspepsia, from which so many of us suffer. Do not think you are failing in your duty when you take needed relaxation; labour lightened is not labour lost, and our Divine Master still says to His overtaxed disciples, "Come aside and rest awhile."

Take care of your *minds*. Give attention to reading, but be sure and read the right things. Be on your guard that you do not let the newspaper absorb too much of your time. It is valuable in its place, but out of its place, it is most injurious. It not only takes an undue proportion of your time, but it creates the habit of desultory reading, a habit most injurious to a theological student.

Keep a corner of your library for experimental, and devotional, reading. Remember you are a *Christian*, as well as a *Minister*, and that you must be fed, if you would feed others successfully. If you can get but one book of the kind, let it be *Rutherford's Letters*. It is a book that has done me more good than any other merely human book that I have ever read; and on a Saturday night, when my work is done, and the sermons for the Sabbath are ready, I always feel that while reading those glorious *Letters*, I am renewing my strength, and laying in a preparation which will greatly bless me on the morrow.

Begin, and end, every day, with the Bible, and read it not as a minister, but as a Christian. Read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest the blessed words, and your profiting will appear unto all. It will lift you above the fogs of doubt and uncertainty, and give you a sure footing in your journey to the skies. Remember what Mr. Wesley says: "After having sought for truth with some diligence for half a century, I am at this day hardly sure of anything but what I learn from the Bible."

Take care of your *souls*. Remember that it is only

spiritual strength that will enable you to accomplish your work. That, if you lose this, you will become weak as other men.

Everything, therefore, that injures your spirituality, robs you of your power. Satan knows this, and acts accordingly. Against you he will bring his most powerful temptations, and no effort will be left unmade in order to rob you of your strength, and ultimately to effect your ruin. His cry will be "aim not at great or small, but at the king of Israel only." Be therefore on your guard, and remember as the fierce assault is made, that no strange thing has happened unto you.

Your position also will bring with it special dangers. Outsiders imagine that it is an easy thing for ministers to keep up their spiritual life. Alas for us, there is not a minister but knows by sad experience that it is not so. There is a constant danger of our becoming *formal*, and of our being content with the form. It is so in reading the Scriptures. It is so in public, and private, prayer. It is so in talking to sinners; and it is so in preaching the Gospel. Unless, therefore, we are constantly on our guard, we shall be ensnared by the evil. There is also a danger of our becoming *indolent*. You will now be left pretty much to yourselves, and, if you please, you may dream through the round of your duties, with even a degree of approval by the people. But beware. In the arbour of ease Christian lost his roll. In God's sight idleness is sin. It is the barren tree that is to be cut down, and the unprofitable servant that is to be cast into outer darkness.

There is also the danger of being puffed up with *pride*. You are now, for a time, to be placed in a position of influence, and the possession of power always brings with it danger to its possessor. It is so with wealth, it is so with social position, and it is so with office in the world, and the Church. Be therefore on your guard against this.

You are not to give yourself airs, and "lord it over God's heritage," but remember "the servant of the Lord" must be gentle, patient, and meek.

There is also the danger of yielding to *sensuality*. You will be bidden to the feast, and if you are not on your guard, the table will become a snare to you. Appetites may be easily created, and habits may be easily formed, and, before you are aware of your danger, you may be tied and bound with the chain of your sin. I know you shudder at the thought that either of you should ever become a glutton, or a drunkard; and that you may be ready to say, "Is thy servant a dog, that he should do this thing?" but others *have* done it, and hence it may be done again, and therefore I utter to you the warning cry, "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall."

There are other dangers, to which I would fain point, and against which I would wish to guard you, but the time fails me, and I must leave them. I will, however, utter one word of warning against the danger of your becoming that despicable thing *a trifler*. You have special talents, and gifts; you will see the humorous side of things, and be able to describe them graphically, while the very reaction from the sad, and depressing, duties of your profession will incline you to rush in the opposite direction; but be on your guard. There is serious danger. The good story, and the hearty laugh, have their use, and I, who enjoy both as much as any man, am not likely to condemn them, but see to it that you keep them within due bounds. It is a slippery place, and you must note the danger. Stronger men than you have fallen there, and instead of being famous for their wisdom to win souls, they have been famous for their "foolish talking and jesting;" and men have never thought of speaking to them on spiritual subjects, but have said that when they were in the pulpit, they ought never to come out; and when out of the pulpit,

they ought never to go in. May this never be said of you! Beware, oh beware, my dear young friends, lest from any cause you should have at last to utter the dread wail, "They made me a keeper of vineyards, but my own vineyard I have not kept."

In order to avoid this *be much in your closet*. That is the battle ground on which your destiny is decided. If you are right there, you will be right everywhere; if wrong there, you will be wrong everywhere. See to it that by reading, meditation, and prayer, you keep up that communion with God which will enable you to say with the saintly M'Chéyne, "I am better acquainted with Jesus Christ than I am with any man in the world."

Your danger will be greatly increased by the fact that though you teach, and warn others, few, if any, will ever utter a warning word to you. Your danger may be seen, and your fall proclaimed, but no warning cry will be raised, and no helping hand stretched out to pluck you back from ruin. Many a fallen minister has been maddened as he has discovered that he was the last to see his peril, and that so-called friends had watched his fall without a warning word. It is because of your spiritual solitude that I to-day point out your dangers, and with almost an agony of soul beseech you to

"Leave no unguarded place,
No weakness of the soul;
Take every virtue, every grace,
And fortify the whole."

Take care of your *character*. Some men are foolish enough to say, "They don't care what people think, or say, about them." They *ought* to care—a good name is better than great riches, and a Bishop is to be blameless, and of good repute. Whatever may be the character of your *gifts*, see that your *life* is right. Adorn the doctrine of God your Saviour in all things. Christ has received many wounds

in the house of His friends, but none have struck deeper than those given by the hands of a minister. Depend upon it our lives are far more influential than our sermons, and the devil is far more anxious to injure the one than the other. See, then, that you be living epistles, seen and read of all men. Wherever you are deficient, be right here. Live so that all who know you may take notice of you, that you have been with Jesus. Study carefully the directions given you by your great Master. Hide His words in your hearts.

Expect results. Properly applied labour brings results elsewhere, and surely they should *here*. The farmer plants his field and expects the crop; the fisherman throws out his net and expects a haul of fishes; and are *we*, doing a *great* work, and with *God* for our *helper*, to sow our seed and not expect a harvest; to cast our net by Divine guidance, and never secure a fish? Common sense as well as Christian faith rejects the idea. I know we shall not be always reaping and never sowing; but we surely are not to be *always sowing*, and *never reaping*. Rather let us rejoice in the certainty of the promise that "They that sow in tears shall reap in joy."

"It is required of stewards, that they be found faithful."

The world expects it. When a man undertakes an office he is always expected to discharge the duties connected therewith. It is so with the soldier. It is so with the fireman, it is so with the policeman, and it is so with the Christian minister. And for this reason I confess I like to see men separated to this work with a little distinction in their dress. It is a public avowal of the high office they sustain. It is sometimes a restraint to them, and it frequently opens their way for great usefulness.

The world often expects too much from us, it is true; but the height of the standard which they erect is an

honour both to us, and to our Master, and we must seek to reach it as nearly as we can.

The Church expects it. She has given you many advantages. She gives you her property to use. Her chapels, her mission rooms, and her schools. She gives you your support. It is her bread you eat, her clothes you wear, her houses you inhabit. *She* is faithful to her engagements to you, and she has a right to expect *you* to be faithful to your engagements to her.

Your fellow ministers expect it. They have laboured, and you enter into their labours. With much toil, and care, and sacrifice, they have gathered churches together, and they expect you to guard, and teach, and feed, them. Others of them are your contemporaries, and they labour on in the various fields to which they are appointed, in the sure confidence that you will do your part in that department intrusted to your care.

Above all, God requires it. We are but your fellow-servants, *He* is the great proprietor; as Paul says in the next verse, "He that judgeth me is the Lord." Remember your obligation to Him. He awoke you from the sleep of sin. He pardoned your iniquities. He renewed your nature. He qualified you for the ministry, and called you into it. He opened your way, and has led you to this day. And why has all this been done? not just that you may wear a black coat, and be called Reverend, but that you may labour in His vineyard, and do the work which He appoints. If you neglect this, He will say as He did to the unjust steward, "How is it that I hear this of *thee*? Of *thee* for whom I have done so much; of *thee* to whom I had committed such precious treasures; of *thee* whom I had honoured so highly? Dishonour and anguish shall be thy portion for ever."

And now we separate. You know your office, you know

your work. You know the expectations entertained respecting you. May God be with you! Your working day will soon end, and the highest honour, or the deepest doom, will be the result of your conduct. Our next great meeting will be in the presence of the Master. The summons for our departure is even now sounding in our ears. Multitudes are gone, and our turn may be next. The shadow of death rests upon me as I speak. At the last Hull Conference, one of the truest men that ever lived stood in this pulpit to give the charge, Samuel Romilly Hall; and I was sitting in one of those pews listening to the words of fire that stirred my soul as it was never stirred before. Oh, how I longed for some penitent form to which I might run, and where I might publicly ask for pardon for the wasted, and guilty, past! What havoc death has made since then! That manly form has passed away, and Thomas Vasey, and Luke H. Wiseman, and R. W. Perks, and Morley Punshon, and Gervase Smith, and Samuel Coley, and a host of others, whose presence and leadership we expected for years to come, are gone; and when the next Conference is held in this good old town, many of us shall have followed them, and the memory of our "vanished forms" will throw shadows on their hearts, as theirs do on ours to-day.

We shall meet again. But when we next meet the day will be ended, and our probation over. Then the life history of each of us will be contained in the one word of "Faithful," or "Unfaithful." The one word bright with the light of heaven, and the other dark with the gloom of hell. There will be no escape, no appeal, no opportunity of redress. We must meet our lives again, where light is clear, and error impossible. The influence of every act, and word, will then be revealed. We shall need no accuser, "Every one of us must give an account of *himself* to God."

Take heed, therefore, that you live a life that will bear

review in the light of eternity, and in the presence of God. To a large extent life is before you, and you may make it an angel to bless, or a demon to haunt you, long as eternal ages roll. With many of us most of life is gone, and all that we can do is penitently to kneel, and cry for pardon. With *you* it is not so; and I charge you in the presence of God, and in the face of this congregation, to seize the moments as they pass, and use them in the service of your Master: ever

"Bear in your faithful minds the end,
And keep the prize in view."

"The great and terrible day of the Lord" will soon be here. If you forget your Master, or trifle with or neglect your work, and so prove unfaithful (which God forbid!), His frown will be to you the beginning of hell. If, on the other hand, you go forth in God's strength to do the work to which He has called you, counting no work too difficult, no sacrifice too great, so that you may win souls, and build up Christ's Church, and thus be faithful (which God grant!), His smile will be to you the beginning of heaven.

And now, farewell! May God be the strength of your hearts, and your portion for ever!

"O that each in the day
Of His coming may say,
'I have fought my way through,
I have finished the work Thou didst give me to do!'

O that each from his Lord
May receive the glad word,
'Well and faithfully done!
Enter into My joy, and sit down on My throne!'"

II.

GOD WITH US, AS WITH OUR FATHERS.¹

"The Lord our God be with us, as He was with our fathers : let Him not leave us, nor forsake us."—1 KINGS viii. 57.

MY text, as you know, is from the prayer that Solomon offered at the consecration of the Temple—the most sublime prayer that was ever offered from human lips. It was marked by deep reverence and great humility, and it everywhere recognises man's absolute dependence upon God. My text may be regarded as a summary of this prayer; and it has struck me as being specially applicable to the peculiar circumstances under which we are met to-night. "The Lord our God be with us, as He was with our fathers : let Him not leave us, nor forsake us."

You will see that there is, first, a grateful recognition of God's presence with the fathers. When Solomon uttered these words he, of course, referred to the fathers of the Jewish nation. And who can doubt that God was with them? An almost unbroken series of miracles proclaimed His presence. I wish to apply the words to our Methodist fathers, and may I not say that an unbroken series of moral miracles demonstrated His presence with them? Let us look at them for a while, that we may be humbled and stimulated, and so led to copy their example, that we may be prepared to carry

¹ The last sermon preached in Oldham Street Chapel, Manchester.

30 GOD WITH US, AS WITH OUR FATHERS.

out and complete the work which they began. One of the great defects of the present generation of Methodists is their want of acquaintance with their Methodist forefathers. There are, I fear, a large number of our young Methodists growing up to whom the names of, say, John Nelson, and Mrs. Hester Ann Rogers, have no charm. This ought not so to be; and if to-night, in the few words that I shall speak, I can only persuade the young people who are listening to me to go home and study the glorious biographies which we possess, I am quite sure that our meeting will not have been in vain.

Let us look then; I repeat, for a moment or two at our Methodist forefathers, and we shall see that "there were giants in those days." Mine is a very rough sketch of them, and will therefore be very imperfect. Look first, at their *faith*. They were men "strong in faith, giving glory to God." The late George Dawson said that what the world wanted was a Church for doubters. I thank God the Methodist Church has never been able to supply that want. Ours is a Church for "believers." For "believers suffering," it may be; for "believers fighting," it may be; for "believers working," it may be; but not for believers doubting. The faith of our fathers was simple, and strong. What God said, they believed, because God said it; and they did not want any man, or any set of men, to endorse the words of Jehovah. To them God was God, and the devil was the devil, and sin was sin, and pardon was pardon, and hell was hell, and heaven was heaven. Hence when they went out, they had a creed, and they could say, "We believe, and therefore speak." That was one secret of their success. When a preacher is in the pulpit, there is a sympathy between the people and him, which enables them at once to discover whether he believes what he is saying or not. I have heard of an eminent man saying at the close of his sermon: "Those are my opinions

to-day; but I do not say they will be my opinions next Sunday. I am a seeker after truth, and who knows what discoveries I may make before we meet again?" It was not so with our fathers. They went out in the assurance that what they believed to-day, they would believe to-morrow, and right on to the end. Their faith was seen everywhere—seen not only in their sermons, but in their prayers. Oh, but they were mighty in prayer! When they knelt down they spoke to a living God, and they "moved the Arm that moves the world." When they prayed, heaven was opened, and showers of blessing came down on the children of men. And in their ordinary lives their faith was also seen. Did God give them work to do? whoever attempted to oppose and hinder them, they went forward; they "laughed at impossibilities, and cried, 'It shall be done.'" There they stand then, and nobody can look at them without seeing that one prominent feature was their strong and simple faith.

Then look at their *love*. It was not sentimentalism. It was Divine love, kindled on the altar of their hearts by the Holy Ghost. Their love to God, how ardent, how burning, how quenchless! Their love to one another, heard in their tones, seen in their language, and discovered in their Church arrangements. They may almost be said to have introduced the habit of shaking hands amongst the lower classes of this country. When they met they shook hands. And they did not do it daintily. Their heart was with their hand; and oftentimes the Methodist grip had more meaning than the Freemason's. If any of them was in trouble, the rest sympathized with him, and if any were in prosperity the rest rejoiced. How they loved one another! I said you saw it in their Church arrangements. It is seen in their class-meetings. When they met they met to talk about their love to God, and their love to one another. They did not keep all their doubts, and

fears, as if they were sacred things, and carry them to the class-meeting, till it became an ice-house in which men's teeth chattered, and their blood froze. No; they went as flames of fire, cheering, and inspiring, each other. And in the class-meeting they provided what we are told the world wants—liberty, equality, and fraternity. If the "Squire" came in, the class-leader called him "brother;" and if the pauper came in, he was still a "brother." Worldly distinctions were left outside: they were the children of God by faith in Christ, and they met as such. They had so much love that their meeting once a week was not enough. They instituted a new meeting—the Love-feast—an institution which no other Church has yet ventured to adopt. And, oh, what miles they walked to those love-feasts! Ten, fifteen, twenty miles were as nothing. They sang all the way there, and they sang louder still as they went back; and when they afterwards met they said, "'Did not our hearts burn within us?' What a glorious time we had!"

Then there was their *love to the Bible*. It was so marked that they were called "Bible bigots" and "Bible moths." They hid God's Word in their hearts. They were mighty in the Scriptures. It was spirit and life to them. Hence, with hearts full of love to God and man, and to God's Word, they went to the work to which they were called. When I hear any class of men spoken of as "being like the first Methodists," I always ask, Are they diligent Bible students? If not, they cannot be like them, for they were men of one Book.

Then look at their *holiness*. Their holiness was not a creed simply, but a life. A blessed experience. They avoided that which was evil, and they cleaved to that which was good. They were called the "holy club;" and when you asked them what their work was, the answer was always ready: "Our work is not to build churches, or

chapels, do this, or that, "wonderful thing, but to spread Scriptural holiness through the land." There was no sanction for sin in the Methodist class-room, and there was never any peace with the devil proclaimed from a Methodist pulpit. Wherever you met with a Methodist, you met with one who hated sin almost as much as he loved the Saviour.

And then, look at their *zeal*. Their love, I said just now, was not sentimentalism. Some people's love is wonderfully lackadaisical: it all goes off in song. Our Methodist fathers were not like that. Their love turned into flame. It took hold of them, it permeated them, it lifted them up, it constrained them. Was there work to do, they did it cheerfully. Was there a journey to take, they joyously took it. Was there anything which would benefit men, they were glad to bestow it. Was there anything in which they could glorify God, they rejoiced in the opportunity. As they went about, you could hear them sing, and when they dared not sing, you might hear them humming to themselves, "A charge to keep I have, a God to glorify," and they acted accordingly. They worked so hard, that those who looked on, and did not understand them, called them "work-mongers," and said they expected to win heaven by their works.

The sketch would not be complete if I were to omit their *happiness*. Whenever you met with one of our fathers you met with a man who was a living proof that religion does not make people melancholy. If I might divide the army of the living God into legions, I should say the Methodist legion was the singing legion. Charles Wesley wrote, it is said, some six thousand hymns, and John Wesley, moving from one end of the land to the other, with his quick, delicate ear, caught a beautiful tune wherever he heard it, and either composed a hymn for it himself, or asked his

brother Charles to do it; and when some one said, "This is a song tune," he said, "I don't care about that; why should the devil have all the best tunes?" And so when he had finished his sermon in a village, he met the Society, taught them the tune, and they set their neighbours singing, and thus they seemed to "roll the rapturous hosanna round." Their happiness! They had gone to the right source, they went to the Bible; and some of us would be a great deal happier if we were to follow their example. The Bible is the very fountain of joy for our poor, perishing world. If you ask, Why read the Bible? I commend to you St. John's answer—and I have sometimes wished it could be printed in letters of gold on every Bible in the world: "These things write we unto you, that your joy may be full." When our fathers came to God's house they spent a good deal of time in singing; and they, like David, were not afraid of "repeats." Classical music does not suit a warm heart. There is not room in it. You are through it, and out of it, before you are well in it: and I say here, not without deliberation, that I think one of the greatest benefits that some of you good folks who understand music can confer on the Methodist Church just now is to save the old Methodist tunes, for as the revival which God is giving us spreads through the Connexion we shall want them again. I know that some of our friends sneer at the old style, but the music was heard in heaven, and brought priceless blessings to earth. How they sang! What a volume of sound went up from a Methodist chapel! And the places they built were suited for it. When they erected places of worship they did not erect splendid tombs. They built bright and happy homes, and having built them, they filled them; and when they were there you hardly ever knew when they would get out. When at last they did leave, you could hear them in many a country lane, and across many a wild

moor, singing, sometimes in twos and threes, and sometimes alone—

"My God, I am Thine, what a comfort divine,
What a blessing to know that my Jesus is mine :
In the heavenly Lamb thrice happy I am,
And my heart it doth dance at the sound of His name."

These are our Methodist "fathers"—men wonderfully like the first Christians. My sketch is rough and rapid, but I believe it is true to life; and looking at their faith, at their love, at their zeal, at their holiness, and at their happiness, do you wonder that God used them for His glory? They were few, they were poor, many of them unlearned, and they had against them all the power of men and devils; but God's strength was made perfect in their weakness, and they have called into existence, as the result of their glorious labours, the largest Protestant Church in the world.

And who can doubt that God "was with our fathers"? Listen to their testimony, read their books, and always, and everywhere, you meet with the declaration, "The best of all is, God is with us." Yes, He was with them in life, strengthening, guiding, comforting, and delivering them. And He was with them in death, bearing them up, and making them more than conquerors. "Ah!" said an old doctor to Adam Clarke on meeting him down this very road, when the cholera was raging in the neighbourhood, and he had seen many of the Methodists passing into eternity, "Adam, thy people die well." Glory be to God, they did die well! and the secret was that God was with them. With them in their labours when they toiled, and with them in their sufferings and weakness when they died, and after death He took them to be with Him in heaven for ever. Is not our gathering here to-night a proof that God was with them? Go back, as many of us have been doing to-day, one hundred and fifty years. Then there was no Methodism

in existence. To-day there are thirty thousand ministers, eighty thousand local preachers, five million church members, and twenty-five million adherents! Go back one hundred and forty years, and you will find no Methodism in Lancashire; but John Nelson, the Yorkshire stonemason, is announced to preach at the Market-Cross; I don't know where that is; some of you do, I dare say. He went there single-handed and preached, and that was the unfurling of the Methodist banner in Lancashire, and Manchester especially. A surging crowd of two thousand gathered around him, jeering, laughing, mocking, and some pelting him with stones. "By and by," he says, "one of them struck me in the forehead and cut my head open, and the people listened the more readily as they saw the blood streaming down my face." That is the stuff your fathers were made of. He rejoiced as he stood there with the blood running down his face, to tell them of the blood of Christ that cleansed from all sin. Three years passed away, and he would be tempted to say he had spent his strength for nought, and laboured in vain. But God had said, "My word shall not return unto Me void." The people have talked and thought about the sermon, and there comes a letter from John Bennet to Mr. John Wesley telling him that "some young men who had heard Nelson preach had been meeting together, anxious about their souls, and had formed a Society, taken a little room, and written to Charles to ask him to ask his brother to own them as brethren." One would like to have the names of those young men: That is the beginning of Methodism in Manchester. Think of it. Those few poor young men crowded in a little room in which a widow lives, and which contains a loom, a bed, a table, and a chair! And what do you see in Lancashire to-day? Eighty Circuits, two hundred and fifty ministers, eight hundred chapels, sixty thousand members, and one hundred and fifty thousand

Sunday scholars! Well might we sing as we have done to-night—

“When He first the work begun,
Small and feeble was His day;
Now the word doth swiftly run,
Now it wins its widening way;
More and more it spread and grows,
Ever mighty to prevail,
Sin’s strongholds it now o’erthrows,
Shakes the trembling gates of hell.”

We may therefore well say, “Thou wast with our fathers.”

In the second place, there is the earnest petition offered that God may be with the children, as He was with the fathers: “The Lord our God be with us, as He was with our fathers.” We have seen how He was with the fathers, and how He made the “little one a thousand, and the small one a great nation;” and is there one of us who can help lifting up his heart, and praying that God may be with us, as He was with them? Take care—let me speak a word of warning. I must do it—take care that you rest on no arm but that of the Almighty. We have many advantages. We have the advantage of numbers; we have the advantage of wealth; we have the advantage of learning; we have the advantage of organization; we have the advantage of the sympathy of other Churches; we have the advantage of having the co-operation of influences, some secular and some social, that marvellously help us in our work. We have all that; but there is a voice from heaven saying to us to-night, “Without Me ye can do nothing.” No; increase your wealth, learning, influence, and perfect your organization; but without the Spirit of God no heart will ever be broken, and no soul will ever be saved. Oh, lift up your hearts and say, “Lord be with us, as Thou wast with our fathers!”

That is what we want, brethren. We have a great work to do. Methodism has not done its work. Our work, I

say, is to "spread Scriptural holiness through the land." We have not done that yet. We have not done it in the big towns, and in the cities; we have not even done it in the villages. There is therefore a great work for us to do. The world needs Methodism to-day as much as ever it did. God forbid that I should speak one word that would pain the mind of any member of another Church, but I cannot look out on some of the other Churches without deep anxiety and fear. I look in one direction, and see Popery throwing its withering blight upon the fairest and the best. I look in another direction, and I see Socinianism sapping the very life and vigour of the Church. And when I see other Churches divided and distracted, and remember that the Church is the only organization that God has called into existence in order that souls may be won for Christ and heaven, I see that there is need of Methodism, and that there is a great work for her to do.

Then what is our duty? Certainly to be prepared for the work. And how better can we be prepared for the work than by catching the spirit, and imitating the example, of our fathers? We boast that we are Methodists. Take care that men see the family likeness. It is said of Alexander the Great that he had in his army a man who was reported to him as being a coward, and whose name was Alexander. The Emperor went to him one day, and said, "Is thy name Alexander?" The man said it was; whereupon the Emperor said, "Then thou must either change thy name, or change thy conduct." And so I would whisper to some, change your name, or change your conduct. I ask again—Is there a family likeness in you? Are you remarkable for your simple, strong faith? The fathers are gone, but the promises remain, can we grasp them as our fathers did? When God speaks the word, can we "laugh at impossibilities, and cry it shall be done"? Put the question to yourselves—Have I the

family likeness? Are you remarkable for your love? Has the love-feast a charm for you far more than the ball-room, or the theatre? Do you love one another with pure hearts fervently? Do you love your Bible? Do you hide it in your heart? Are you "mighty in the Scriptures"? Are the promises your richest treasure? Are the precepts your constant guide? Is there the family likeness? And your zeal. Are you remarkable for this? Are you a volunteer or a pressed man? Have you been to your superintendent and said, "Do you want a Sunday-school teacher?—here am I; do you want a Tract-distributor?—here am I; do you want a worker in the Band of Hope?—here am I." Is the zeal of the Lord's house eating you up? Do you speak to your friends about the Saviour, "telling to all around what a dear Saviour you have found"? Are you remarkable for your holiness? Do you "adorn the doctrine of God your Saviour in all things"? Are you remarkable for your happiness? Does your bright face and glad heart recommend religion to those around you? Do men "take knowledge of you, that you have been with Jesus"? If so, you have a right to expect that the Lord will be with you, as He was with your fathers. God delights to be with men. He tells us His "delights are with the sons of men." No! God will not leave us unless we force Him away. How can we do that? you say. You can do it in many ways. You can do it by disloyalty. Let no one persuade you to do dishonour to your Saviour, to be disloyal to your God. You can drive Him away by your worldliness. There is our special danger. Wealth increases, and then temptations come. We want to copy the example of those about us. Somebody else has a bigger house, and we must have larger ones too. Somebody else has started a carriage and pair; we also must do the same. And the result is that in many cases it takes all our wealth to support our own extravagance, and we have

very little left for the Church, or the world around. Oh, beware of worldliness! "If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him."

Avoid the ball-room, avoid the theatre, avoid the public-house. Pander not to self and sense, but cling to Christ, and love your Bible. "Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation." We have to win the world for Christ. Let us go to our knees, and cry to God that He may qualify us for the work. God has taught us again and again that we can do no great work without His presence. When Abraham was going out to an unknown country, God promised to be with him. When Moses was going to lead the children of Israel across the wilderness he said, "If Thy presence go not with us, carry us not up hence." I would sooner not go than go without Thee. But God assured him of His presence, and he went on. So when Christ was sending out His apostles to convert the world, what was His own blessed word? "Lo! I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." I am with you; My presence shall be your strength, and guide, and glory. If that is so, my brethren, when we go out into the world we need not fear men nor devils. Through God we shall do valiantly. Oh, I beseech you let us cry as one man, "Lord be with us, as Thou wast with our fathers: leave us not, nor forsake us"!

And now, before we part, I want to say a word or two to any who are here and are not saved.

Mine is the last appeal that you will ever hear from this pulpit. Many a time in this place you have heard the word of warning. Many a time you have been "almost persuaded" to become Christians, but you have delayed. I come to-night and I ask thee, my brother, my sister, for the last time from this pulpit, to come to Christ. He is here to-night. Here mighty to save. Oh, let the last service be the time of decision! Why not? You have put it off

GOD WITH US, AS WITH OUR FATHERS. 41

and off. Don't put it off any longer ; but now as I speak let the cry go up to heaven, " I will arise and go to my Father." He is waiting to receive thee. Oh, why should not heaven be made glad to-night by the conversion of souls to Christ ? Why not ? All things are now ready, and God is waiting to be gracious.

" Come, all the world ; come, sinner, thou !
All things in Christ are ready now."

Oh, come this last evening ! Come before I close the book. Come before my voice is silent. Come to Christ to-night, and thou shalt obtain eternal life. Is there a wanderer here ? Oh, come back ! You are perhaps thinking of the " peaceful hours " you once " enjoyed " in this sanctuary, but now you have " an aching void, the world can never fill." Come back. I bring a message to thee. That message is, " Return unto Me, and I will return unto you." Come back, and let the God of your fathers be your God for ever and ever. Christian friends, my brethren and sisters in Christ, we go from this place to-night never to come back again. I pray you

" Bear in your faithful minds the end,
And keep the prize in view."

We shall not meet again until the trumpet shall sound and the dead shall be raised. Oh, let us be faithful !

It is a grand name that we bear. Keep it so that it shall be grander still when you part with it. Let it be a brighter name when you leave it to your children than when you received it from your father. Let us to-night, in the presence of each other, and, it may be, in that of our sainted founder and fathers, pledge ourselves ; let others do as they will, we will try to be simple Methodists—men of faith, men of zeal, men of love, men of holiness and happiness, living near heaven, having power with God, and bringing heaven down to men. Shall it be so ?

42 *GOD WITH US, AS WITH OUR FATHERS.*

Then will this night be a blessed night. We shall go away "strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might." And now I leave my message: "The Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." May "the Lord our God be with us, as He was with our fathers: let Him not leave us nor forsake us," for Christ's sake.
Amen.

III.

AN OLD PROMISE FOR THE NEW YEAR.¹

"I will bless thee ; . . . and thou shalt be a blessing."—GEN. xii. 2.

THE joy with which we enter upon a New Year is always tempered with a feeling of anxiety. Life is felt to be fleeting and uncertain, and man to be but as a bubble floating on the solemn stream of time. Our companions disappear from our side, and we are painfully reminded that "we are strangers . . . and sojourners," like "all our fathers ;" and that "our days on the earth are as a shadow, and there is none abiding." The good wishes, that greet us as we step out into the year, have a minor tone, and seem to be but the echoes of "voices gone." We look backward with a sigh, and onward with a tremor. We feel our own helplessness, and that to lean on those around us, is to build on the shifting sand. We long for something permanent and abiding. We crave "some solid ground to rest upon." The "heart crieth out for God, even for the living God." He hears our cry ; and, lifting upon us the light of His countenance, lovingly whispers : "I will bless thee ; and thou shalt be a blessing." May we have ears, to hear, and hearts, to receive, this twofold promise ; and, making it our watchword, go out into the year with a bright face, and a firm step!

Notice, *first*, what God promises to do to us : "I will bless thee."

¹ A New Year's Sermon for 1884.

44 . AN OLD PROMISE FOR THE NEW YEAR.

Let us look at these glorious words. They form one of the brightest constellations in the heaven of promise, and each word is a star of the first magnitude.

See how plain the promise is! All that is vital in God's Word is plain. There are parts of that Word dark with excessive light: regions that are like the primeval forest, where there is no footprint, and into which man cannot penetrate. Many have foolishly made the attempt, for "vain man would be wise;" but they have come back with bleeding feet, and a weary heart, having learnt by sad experience that in God's Word, as well as elsewhere, "trespassers will be prosecuted." God understands us better than we understand ourselves, and He leads us "in a plain path, because of our enemies." The path of duty, and the path of promise, are both plain. We are on an important journey, and our time is limited; let us therefore be on our guard against the temptation to wander; and leave the mysteries, till we have more time, and clearer light. Dr. Watts, who was once a trespasser, and who reaped the trespasser's punishment, said, when his feet again trod the narrow path: "Oh, how I thank God for the simple promises!" So let us say as we turn to our text. It is milk for babes. There is only one word of two syllables in it. We may give it as a first reading-lesson to the little child, and yet it has in it a meaning at which the highest archangel will wonder. It is well that it should be so; for the promises, like the stars, are made for night. When the sun is shining, the stars are not visible, but when the sun disappears, the stars steal out in their silvery beauty. So it is with the promises: in the sunshine of prosperity, their beauty is invisible, but let the night of adversity throw its dark shadow round us, and a thousand promises will appear, to throw light upon our path, and comfort into our hearts. The full beauty of a promise is never seen till it has been read through tears. Look up, then,

poor sufferer! The night may be long and dark, but the stars are out: look at them and rejoice; for there, in letters of living light, you may read the promise: "I will bless thee."

See how *personal* the promise is: "I will bless *thee*:" personal on God's side, and personal on thine. Do I hear you say, "But this is my difficulty. This promise was made to Abraham; what right have I to claim it as made to me? I have no more right to other people's promises than to other people's money." This is certainly true; and the enemy of our souls takes care that we do not forget it. Often when the Christian claims some much-needed promise he says: "That promise was made to Abraham, or David, or Paul, and not to you; you have no right to plead it." To escape from this paralysing suggestion, you must remember your character. You are a believer in Christ. I do not say that your faith is strong, it may be "weaker than the bruised reed;" but you are a believer; and our relationship to Christ does not depend on the strength of our faith, but upon its existence. A babe is as truly a son as a young man.

Let me ask you to look at the third chapter of the Epistle to the Galatians. In the sixteenth verse it is said: "Now to Abraham and *his seed* were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ." In the fourteenth verse we are told that Christ redeemed us, "that the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles;" and in the twenty-ninth verse it is said: "And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." "So then," says the apostle, in the ninth verse, "they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham." We see, then, that the promises were not the private property of those to whom they were spoken—they were "to them, and to their children, and to all that were afar off, even to as many as

the Lord our God shall call." They are the true Church's property—property from which she can never be disendowed. Hence the *New-Testament* saints never hesitated to claim and apply *Old-Testament* promises. See, for example, the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews. When encouraging the Christians to bear up under the trials to which they were exposed, he says, "For He hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee;" and though this promise was made to Joshua nearly two thousand years before, yet he unhesitatingly applies it to them, and urges them to claim it, for he goes on to say, "So that *we* may boldly say, The Lord is *my* helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me."

It is therefore clear that all the promises in the Bible are "Yea and Amen in Christ Jesus;" and that if we take hold of Christ with one hand, we may take hold of any promise in the Bible with the other. No rebel has a right to these precious treasures. He is a child of wrath, and the threatenings alone are his portion, and will be as long as he remains in rebellion; but, believer, thou art a "child of God by faith in Christ Jesus," and as such thou art come to an estate the value of which is boundless. Thou art "heir of the promises." Live up to thy dignity. Claim thy right. Forget for a moment that God has another child on earth. Hear Him speaking, and as He says, "I will bless thee," gather into thy heart the fulness of the meaning, and say with Paul, "He loved *me*, and gave Himself for *me*."

"JAH, JEHOVAH, is my Lord,
Ever merciful and just;
I will lean upon His Word,
I will on His promise trust.

Strong I am, for He is strong,
Just in righteousness Divine:
He is my triumphal song;
All He has, and is, is mine."

See how *positive* the promise is: "I *will* bless thee." When God speaks He speaks like a God. With Him "there is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." He is "the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever." He says: "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but My words shall not pass away." "They that trust in the Lord shall be as Mount Zion, which cannot be removed, but abideth for ever."

"Thy promises, how firm they be,
How firm our hope and comfort stands!"

Here is solid ground to rest upon. There may be change and decay everywhere else, but here is an arm that never fails, and a heart that never changes: and He, knowing thy disappointments and heart-sickness, says this morning: "I *will* bless thee." Darkness may be about thee, and thorns and briers may beset thy path, and thy cup be bitter. Thou mayest even now be saying: "Show me wherefore Thou contendest with me." Look up! He has not forgotten to be gracious—

"Behind a frowning Providence
He hides a smiling face."

He will make all things work together for thy good. He will transmute curses into blessings. He loves thee with everlasting love, therefore grasp in faith His glorious promise: "I *will* bless thee."

See how *precious* the promise is! precious for each of the reasons I have named; but having a special preciousness in itself. The other words are but steps to the throne. Let us now look at the throne itself. The life, the soul of the promise, is in the word "bless." The other words derive all their preciousness from this. If this word had not been here, the other words might have but intensified our terror; but here it is in its fulness of glory; and I want you to walk in the light thereof.

"I *will* bless thee." What does "bless" mean? I cannot

tell all its meaning, for it has "A vast, unfathomable sea" of meaning, "Where all my thoughts are drowned;" but if we cannot know *all* the meaning, let us try to know what we can. What did it mean to Abraham? He understood it to mean that God would be his God; that He would guide, protect and prosper Him, and afterwards receive him to His home above; for we are told that "he looked for a city," as well as for all earthly blessings. And we know that ~~these~~ expectations were more than realized. This is what the word means to us; and as such it is our privilege to receive it to-day. It means all it seems to mean—yes, and infinitely more; for man's words cannot contain God's meaning. Hence; trembling, timid Christian, I point thee to the promise, and cry: "All, all you need is there!" The more you look at it, the more you will prize it. Like Himself, it is perfect altogether. To change a word would be madness. It quivers with tenderness, it is infinite in power. To receive it is to rise above the world, and see the invisible. If this blessed morning we could, on the wings of faith and love, enter into the holy place, and passing through the ranks of shining worshippers hear the Divine voice saying: "I will bless thee," all fear would die, and henceforth we should rejoice with a "joy unspeakable and full of glory." That Voice is saying it now; why should not our joy be the same? Let therefore our hearts sing—

"Here then I doubt no more,
But in His pleasure rest,
Whose wisdom, love, and truth and power,
Engage to make me blest.

To accomplish His design
The creatures all agree;
And all the attributes Divine
Are now at work for me."

Notice, *secondly*, what God promises to make us to others: "I will make thee a blessing." He takes us into

closest fellowship, and makes us co-workers with Himself. Christianity gives the death-blow to selfishness; no selfish man can be a Christian, and no Christian can be selfish. Self dies as grace increases, till at last the "man in Christ Jesus," he who is "perfect in love," can truthfully say: "I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me;" then the works that Christ does "shall we do also." Hence we shall strive, not so much to get to heaven, as to bring heaven here. We shall be planets receiving the light from the sun, and reflecting it upon the world. Or, like the disciples, we shall receive the bread from the Saviour's hand, and distribute it among the starving multitude. "Vessels, instruments of grace," it will be our joy to spend our time

"Twixt the mount and multitude,
Doing or receiving good."

God will "make us a blessing." This was part of the purpose of Christ's death. We are told He "gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a peculiar people, *zealous of good works*." Christ's life was also designed to assist in the same purpose. He "went about doing good," leaving us an example, that we should follow His steps." He was active, and active in doing good. He did not shut Himself up in His own enjoyments, or in the contemplation of the glory that was before Him. He did not wait for opportunities, but made them; and went not only to those that needed Him, but to those who needed Him most. He did not confine Himself to what is purely spiritual, but relieved the temporal necessities of those around Him. He healed the sick, fed the hungry, comforted the sorrowful, taught the ignorant. So must we, if we would have His smile, and be partakers of His glory. Idleness is wickedness; selfishness is sin.

The great business of life is to do good. For this we

are to get, and save, and give. For this our blessings are given us, and woe be to us if we misapply our Master's property. The Master keeps a strict account, if we do not; and "It is required in stewards" that they "be found faithful." Unfaithfulness will bring certain punishment. Blessings not rightly used, become curses. Stagnant air becomes poison. Stagnant water spreads disease and death; and riches not rightly used, become corrupt—"gold and silver cankered; and the RUST of them" will "be a witness against" their owners, and will "eat their flesh as it were fire." Oh, let us be on the watch against this peril! and "as we have opportunity, do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith." We shall thus make to ourselves "friends of the mammon of unrighteousness." Let us begin the year by saying: "My business this year is to bless as many people as I can." Opportunities will meet us at every step if we are prepared to seize them; and if we do seize them, we shall ensure our having, in the highest and fullest sense, a very happy New Year. May God say to every reader of these words: "I will bless thee; and thou shalt be a blessing!" and, receiving the promise, let us gratefully sing—

"The God of Abraham praise,
Whose all-sufficient grace
Shall guide me all my happy days,
In all my ways.
He calls a worm His friend,
He calls Himself my God;
And He shall save me to the end,
Through Jesu's blood."

IV.

HOW TO ENSURE A HAPPY NEW YEAR.¹

"Let the children of Zion be joyful in their King."—Ps. cxlix., part of the second verse.

WITH good wishes meeting us at every step, how is it that so few of God's people live really *happy* lives? There are doubtless a combination of reasons, but the principal one is the sad fact that most of them make their happiness depend on the creature, and not on the Creator. David was the representative of the human family when he said: "My soul cleaveth unto the dust." And Christians, as well as worldings, look at things seen more than at things not seen. We leave the fountain of living waters, and hew out cisterns that can hold no water. The world, with its cares, and sorrows so occupies our minds, that God and heaven have but a passing thought. We are "careful and troubled about many things," and it requires a great effort to look at our privileges, and joys. We are often asking: "What shall I eat? and what shall I drink? and wherewithal shall I be clothed?" rather than: "What shall I render unto the Lord for all His benefits toward me?" I want, by God's help, to say a few words to correct this, and hope to do so by enforcing

¹ A New Year's Sermon for 1836.

upon my readers the advice which David gave to the people of God nearly three thousand years ago. We have but to take this advice and a happy New Year will be ours.

I. Look at *Zion*. There are three *Zions* spoken of in the Bible. There is first, the *Zion* of the Jew, which was a hill in Judaea, on one prominence of which David built his palace, and on another Solomon built the Temple. There is next, the *Zion* above, of which John speaks in the Revelation; and, thirdly, there is the *Zion* of the Church to which my text refers, and of which God says it is "graven on His hands." That *Zion*, of which the first was a type, and of which the second will be the everlasting home.

II. Look at *Zion's children*. They are non of them children by birth. They are all children by "adoption and grace." "By nature they are the children of wrath, even as others. But God, who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith" He hath loved them, even while they were "dead in trespasses and sins," has made them "the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus;" and has "translated" them out of the kingdom of darkness "into the kingdom of His dear Son." They are "now no more strangers and foreigners," but are "fellow-citizens with the saints," and have become "the precious sons of *Zion*."

"Glorious things are spoken" of these children; and at some of these I want to glance. First, there is a *great variety* amongst them. They differ in almost every respect. *They differ in their age*. Some of them are "babes" full of weakness, and having everything to learn. Others are in the noon of life, bearing "the burden and heat of the day." Others of them are grey-haired, and are waiting with almost eager longing for their translation to a better home. *They differ in their position in life*. Some of them are "clothed in purple and fine linen," and fare "sumptuously every

day," while others don't know where their next meal is to come from. *They differ in their experience.* Some of them are mountaineers, who live where the sunshine comes first and lingers last; others are lowlanders, who live where the sunshine comes last and leaves first, and where the sky is never very clear. Some of them have one fierce fight, and henceforth enjoy perfect peace; others of them are men of war from their youth. They can scarcely shout hurrah over one victory, before they are in the thick of another struggle. *They also differ in their opinions.* There have been many efforts made to make them think alike; it has, however, been found to be utterly impossible to accomplish it. The minds of men are so differently constituted that they must take different views of the matters that come before them. Hence uniformity of opinion can only be a dream.

Secondly, with all this variety there is a *marvellous unity* amongst them: *They are all one in nature.* They "are all one in Christ Jesus." They form His mystical body. So close is their union that Paul says: They are "of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones;" and their Divine Lord declares that their union with Him is such that whoso "toucheth" them "toucheth the apple of His eye."

They are all one in heart. Whatever difference there may be in other respects, they are all loyal to their King. Touch their heads and they differ, but touch their hearts and they are one. Talk about the *kingdom*, and they quarrel; but talk about the *King*, and they worship and adore. To every one of them His name is music, His face beauty, and His presence heaven. The only true test of sonship is "What think ye of Christ?" The man that loves Christ is a child of Zion wherever he may worship, or whatever name he bears. And the man that does not love Christ, whatever his name or position, has no

part or lot in the matter. He is an impostor, and no true man.

Thirdly, *they enjoy exalted privileges.* David said: "Seemeth it to you a light thing to be a king's son-in-law?" What, then, is it to be the King's son, and that King the Mighty God? There are those who set a light estimate upon Church-fellowship, and are far more easily detached from the Church to which they belong than from their political party. It is a huge mistake, a mistake that greatly injures them, and sadly dishonours and weakens the cause of God. I believe in the army, but I believe also in the regiment; and I believe in every man joining a regiment, and having joined his regiment putting on the regimentals and being faithful unto death. What matters it that a comrade may misunderstand, or even insult me? I do not serve my comrade, but my King.

But whatever we may think of membership with the visible Church, membership with the spiritual Church is a privilege, the value of which no human mind can compute. There is no higher honour than to be a child of Zion.

First, *they enjoy public recognition.* Admission into the family is a solemn transaction performed by Almighty God in the presence of the holy angels. Hence not only does God recognise the children of Zion, but every angel can recognise them, whether they are working in a coal pit or governing a kingdom.

Second, *they enjoy freedom of access to their King.* To them His throne is ever accessible, and His ear, ever open. In trouble they can come to Him for comfort; in perplexity they can come to Him for guidance; in danger they can come to Him for deliverance; in toil they can come to Him for help. Hence they are the most influential persons in the world. The men of science can influence matter; the orator and legislator can influence

men; but the child of Zion can influence God. He can "move the Arm that moves the world."

"O wondrous power of faithful prayer!
What tongue can tell the Almighty grace!
God's hands or bound or open are,
As Moses or Elijah prays:
Let Moses in the Spirit roar,
And God cries out: 'Let Me alone!'"

Remember that what is true of Moses and Elijah is true of every child of Zion. "God is no respecter of persons."

Let parents remember this. Their children may be absent from home, and their hearts full of anxiety respecting them. They write to ministers, and to Christian friends, to solicit their sympathy and care; and they do well; but above all it is their privilege to secure the sympathy and help of their King. The letter to the minister may miscarry, but a believing prayer is never lost. The minister may be unable to meet with the object of your solicitude, but none can hide himself from God. The minister may forget the application, but God never forgets. Let parents, therefore, live up to their privileges, and pour out their hearts before God.

Let the entire Church remember this. We are all anxious for the extension of the kingdom of which we are citizens, and much time is given to the perfecting of machinery and the securing of efficient workers for the accomplishment of our object. All this is wise and right; but when we have secured the most perfect machinery, we shall hear the voice of the King saying: "Without Me ye can do nothing." We are constantly in danger of looking too low. We look to the pulpit when we should be looking to the throne. We expect the ambassador to do what can only be done by the King. When "Zion travaills she brings forth her children;" not when she only organizes, and talks, and holds grand gatherings; but

when she "travails." When she gives herself to prayer, when the closet echoes with her pleadings, and is bedewed with her tears; then God will say "Amen" to her prayers, and "add to the Church such as are being saved." "To your tents, therefore, O Israel!"

"In fellowship, alone,
To God with faith draw near,
Approach His courts, besiege His throne,
With all the powers of prayer:

Go to His temple, go,
Nor from His altar move;
Let every house His worship know,
And every heart His love."

Thirdly, look at Zion's *King*. Zion is not a mob, not a republic, but a kingdom with perfect laws, and a glorious King. That King is the Lord Jesus Christ. It is of Him that Jehovah speaks when He says: "I have set my King upon my holy hill of Zion." "He has made Him to be head over all things to His Church." His laws are absolute. His will supreme. His authority boundless. He lives to guide, protect, and bless His people. Hence it is our joyous privilege to sing—

"This, this is the God we adore,
Our faithful, unchangeable Friend:
Whose love is as great as His power,
And neither knows measure nor end."

To every child of Zion I would therefore cry: "Thy God reigneth!" "Clouds and darkness" may be "round about Him;" but "righteousness and judgment are the habitation of His throne."

Fourthly, look at Zion's *joy*. "Let the children of Zion be joyful in their King." What a rebuke this is to those who regard religion as a thing of gloom! Satan and his emissaries have persuaded men that Zion is a second Sinai: a place where the sun never shines, and songs are never heard, and smiles are never seen: a place where men

"exceedingly fear and quake." We obtained this lie from that miserable mimicry of Christianity, Popery. Would that it were back there again! It is a libel on Zion, and an insult to Zion's King. No, Zion is not a place of gloom; it is the brightest spot on earth; it is a place where the sun shines all the year through, and where

"December's as pleasant as May."

It is "the joy of the whole earth;" and all the true joy there is in the world has come from Zion. Her King is the one fountain of joy. There may be fictitious, imitation, joy in the world, men may "kindle a fire," and walk "in the sparks" that they have "kindled;" but it is a false fire that only makes their darkness visible—

"Their joy is all sadness,
Their mirth is all vain,
Their laughter is madness,
Their pleasure is pain."

The children of Zion have "the joy of the Lord:" a joy that no man taketh from them, a "joy unspeakable, and full of glory." They "joy in the Lord," and as they journey onward—

"Their song awakes with opening light,
And cheers the dark and silent night."

The only truly joyful people in the world are the children of Zion.

It is their instinct to be joyful. God makes all His creatures to be happy, and when His will is "done on earth as it is in heaven,"

"Sorrow and sighing shall flee away."

What a wealth of happiness He bestows upon His creatures! We see it in the gnats that float in the sunbeam; in the lambs on the hillside; in the kitten at the hearth; in the little children crowded into courts where a sunbeam never

comes, and where a breath of pure air cannot enter. Ill-clad and ill-fed, how they triumph over their surroundings, and make the courts ring with their merry laughter! People talk about amusing children: if we leave them alone, healthy children will always amuse themselves. Now the God that made us to be joyous children, has made us to be joyous children of Zion. It would have been out of harmony with His other works if He had not. Hence joy is one of the earliest fruits of the Spirit, and one of the Christian's first utterances is a song of joy.

The Bible is given to us to make us joyful. It contains "glad tidings of great joy;" and John, as the mouthpiece of all the other writers, says: "These things write we unto you, that your joy may be full."

It is the command of God that we should be joyful. It is not left to our cold hearts to decide. God's will is clearly revealed. There is no duty so often laid upon us in the Bible as that of joy. It is repeated over and over again. Hence, in entering upon the New Year with smiles, and gifts, and good wishes, we are acting according to the will of our Heavenly Father. What, then, is to be the object of the joy of the children of Zion?

Not the blessings with which God may intrust them. "If riches increase, set not your heart upon them," is a caution full of meaning for others than the wealthy. *Not the friends that God may give them.* Prize them; thank God for them. But to make our happiness depend upon them is to "be like the heath in the desert;" is to ensure disappointment and sorrow.

"He builds too low that builds below the skies."

The creatures can never take the place of the Creator. They are imperfect—they change or die. *Not our frames and feelings.* Joyous feelings are very pleasant, and therefore very welcome; but they are very unreliable. They are

influenced not only by our relationship to God, but by the state of our health, by our food, by the atmosphere, by the way of the wind, and a thousand other things. Feelings are like icebergs—beautiful to look upon in the sunshine, but never meant for foundations. The habit of introspection, of watching our feelings, is as injurious to the soul, as it is to the body. The Christian should watch his conduct most carefully, should avoid even the appearance of evil, should "follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth;" but the less he thinks about his feelings the better for himself, and for those around him.

The text turns our thoughts to a worthier object than ourselves; it bids us look *up* not *in*. It tells us to be "joyful in our King." If every one of us will obey the command, a happy year is certain. He is with us—with us as our Saviour and Friend. Property may make itself wings, friends may change or die, but we can ever say, "the best of all is, God is with us." He is bending over us with tenderest sympathy, and love. Let us return His glance; let us trust and love and praise Him; let us be "joyful in our King;" let us do it in our closet; let us do it in our class; let us do it in the great congregation. Let this be the work of the year; and then, whatever our position and circumstances, the year will be blessed indeed. To help in this work, let me suggest a few of the topics on which we may dwell.

First, rejoice in His character. Every Christian should be a theologian. Many of the children of men "have not the knowledge of God." They do not know in "whom they have believed." This grieves God, and fearfully in them. God has revealed Himself in His Word; He may therefore be known, and in proportion as He is known, He will be trusted, and loved. Every attribute of our King is a reason for joy to His "children." We should make everything give way in order that we may obtain this knowledge.

60 HOW TO ENSURE A HAPPY NEW YEAR

ledge, and as we obtain it, we should make it known to others. Instead of going to the class-meeting to discourage others with the repeated recital of defects we never take the trouble to get remedied, let us as we go say: "I will speak of the things I have made concerning the King."

Secondly, rejoice in His *history*. Why are the four records given, but that we may "read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest" them? That we may each

"Search the oracles Divine,
Till every heart-felt word be mine."

Thirdly, rejoice in His *works*—*in what He has done*: for the world; for the Church, for us! Let us remember all the way which He has led us; let us to-day look back, and as we do it, let us gratefully sing—

"O the infinite cares,
And temptations, and snares,
Thy Hand has conducted me through!
O the blessings bestowed
By a bountiful God,
And the mercies eternally new!"

In what He is doing—doing in Providence, doing in Grace. How wide the field! how encouraging the scene! How much better to dwell on this than on our own defects, or the defects of others! The King is still working, and His works still "bear witness of Him." Let us "seek them out," and "triumph in them." When we meet, let us "speak of the glory of His kingdom, and talk of His power." This will strengthen our faith and increase our love, and invigorate us for the duties which lie before us. Realizing His present leadership will give us confidence and courage, and send us forth to the world clothed with invincible power.

In what He is going to do. The blessed present is only preparatory to a glorious future. Many of the children of Zion seem to forget this. Instead of anticipating

HOW TO ENSURE A HAPPY NEW YEAR. 61

the future, they are mourning over the past. Instead of going to their home "with their faces thitherward," catching the glory, and hearing echoes of the songs, they are walking backwards, weeping over troubles through which God has safely brought them; or else, "careful and troubled about many things," they are bowed down under a load of anxiety, their foreheads furrowed with care, and their eyes red with weeping. Like the man with the muck-rake, they are gathering together straws and little sticks, and never look at the crown of glory that is just above them. To all such I would cry: "Coronation day is coming!" Many under the shadow of unbelief sigh out: "We don't know what there is before us." True; we don't for a moment or two; but, thank God, we do to all eternity. There is "fulness of joy," and "pleasures for evermore." Yes, poor sufferer,

"A crown of bright glory is waiting for thee!"

Thou hast often gone forward and met troubles; this morning go forward and meet thy joys; "antedate the feast of love." Put on thy crown!—it will ease the headache. Put on thy crown!—it will cure the heartache. Put on thy crown!—it will wean thee from the world. Put on thy crown!—it will be a foretaste of heaven. To many of us this will be the last year on earth, and the first year in heaven. Oh, joyous thought! next New Year's Day I may be

"Far from a world of grief and sin,
With God eternally shut-in."

I don't understand the children of Zion being afraid to die. Good children are never afraid to meet a good father. His coming is anticipated, and longed for and welcomed. So it should be with us; and instead of dwelling on the agony of *parting*, we should dwell on the bliss of *meeting*. Many of us have a bright portion here, and as we look at those we

62 *HOW TO ENSURE A HAPPY NEW YEAR.*

love our lips quiver and our hearts sink ; but however good it is to be here, "to be with Christ is far better."

Let us then realize the full blessedness of our citizenship ; let us live up to our dignity ; let us be joyful in our King. Whatever the year may bring, it will not separate us from Him—whoever fails, He will not depart. He is our God for ever and ever.

"We are His, and He is ours,
To all eternity."

"Let the children of Zion be joyful in their King!"

V.

THE CHRISTIAN'S JOYOUS KNOWLEDGE.¹

"We know that all things work together for good to them
that love God."—Rom. viii. 28.

IT is the privilege of every child of God to have a happy New Year. His happiness does not depend on his circumstances, but on his faith. Faith not only saves from sin, and hell, but from anxiety and fear. The Christian, whose faith is strong, can rejoice in tribulation, and in everything give thanks. Faith, however, can only stand on God's Word. Love, and hope, can stand almost anywhere, but faith must have a "thus saith the Lord" under its feet. If, therefore, this morning, we would triumph over adverse circumstances, and take our part in the New Year's song, we must look at God's Word and rest upon its glorious truths. The Bible contains a certain remedy for every human sorrow, and is given to us that, though living in a "vale of tears," our "joy may be full." There is, however, no magical influence in the mere possession of the Bible; in order to secure its joy, we must "read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest" its life-giving words. Medicine will not cure unless it is taken, and the Bible will never cheer unless it is read, and believed. If we do not "search the Scriptures," we shall never find their priceless treasures. God will never work a miracle to reward us for idleness. An eminent writer has said that "The man who every

¹ A New Year's Sermon for 1887.

64 THE CHRISTIAN'S JOYOUS KNOWLEDGE.

ignorant man or a very wicked man who does not make some good resolution on New Year's day." What better resolution can we make than that 1887 shall be a year of careful Bible study. If we do this, we may rely upon it that it will be a year of holiness, usefulness, and joy. Hesitation, doubt, and fear will die, and "strong in faith we shall give glory to God."

In order to this, let us take to-day the chapter of which my text forms a part. It has always been a favourite with the people of God, and well it may be for it contains an inspired inventory of their wealth. Whatever our circumstances this morning, we shall find that in it our case is fully met. Are we mourning over past sins? It tells us of a full and free pardon. What should we think of the tradesman who, this morning, took down the files containing all the bills he had received during his past life, and casting up the total, declared he was a bankrupt, *though every bill was settled*? His conduct would not be more unwise than yours. We may well be ashamed as we look at the dreadful past, but our shame should only intensify our joy as we remember that all is forgiven. That, to use the strong words of Bishop Beveridge, "Our sins are all crossed out with the red blood of atonement," and that, in the triumphant words of the apostle, "There is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus." Instead of tears, therefore, let us rejoice, and with glad hearts sing—

"No condemnation now I dread,
Jesus, and all in Him, is mine!"

Are we oppressed with a sense of our weakness? The chapter tells us of a divine Helper. That our case is fully met, for not only does Christ intercede for us in heaven, but the Holy Ghost helps us on earth. "Likewise, the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities." That, as the weakness of a child calls out its mother's care, so our weakness will bring us

greater help. That though we shrink to enter the rugged path that opens before us, we need fear no evil, for

" Our Heavenly Guide
With us shall abide,
His comforts impart,
And set up His kingdom of love in our heart.
By day, and by night,
The pillar of light,
Our steps shall attend,
And convoy us safe to our prosperous end."

Are we trembling lest in some unknown future we should fall before our enemies? The chapter asks us, " Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?" and triumphantly answers, " Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." We may therefore triumphantly sing—

" Thee the Great Jehovah deigns
To protect, and defend;
Thee the Eternal God sustains,
Thy Maker and thy Friend."

Are we crushed beneath the weight of some great sorrow, and tempted to say, " All these things are against me"? The text comes, a message from heaven, and as its blessed words fall upon our troubled heart, " The clouds disperse, the shadows fly"—and taking up our laid-by harp, we can joyously sing—

" Away, my needless fears,
And doubts, no longer mine;
A ray of heavenly light appears,
A messenger divine."

To help us therefore to step out into the New Year with a

firm step, and a trustful heart, let us dwell for a while on these precious words. They have comforted and cheered millions, God grant they may comfort and cheer us!

First, *Let us look at the persons spoken of.* Everything depends on our knowing who they are. Unless we know this, we shall not know whether we have any interest in the glorious declaration made respecting them. If I find an unaddressed parcel in the street, I do not claim it as my own. I may open it, and find that it contains something which I greatly need, but I do not therefore say it is mine. I might say, Perhaps some one knew of my need, and laid it there that I might find it. But the reply would at once be, Yes, but perhaps they did not; and the uncertainty would make it impossible for me to claim it. If, however, on reaching home, I found that a similar parcel had been left, bearing my name and address, I should need no more, but at once open it, and appropriate the contents. They would be mine in the most absolute sense.

Now God's promises and threatenings are all carefully addressed, and not, as some seem to imagine, given indiscriminately. The name of the person spoken to, or of, is carefully given, and no man need mistake. Many, even of God's people, overlook this, and because they have not taken the trouble to ascertain the address, have held the promises sent to them with a trembling hand. They have seized them, and found them to be exactly what they needed; but just as they were rejoicing in their possession the devil has whispered, "They are not for you," and they have relaxed their grasp and lost the blessing. Let us then look at the address on this declaration. Who are the favoured persons for whom there is nothing but blessing, and good? The answer is very clear and distinct. Not everybody, for God says of the wicked, "It shall be ill with them." Not the rich, and wise, and great, for God tells us that His thoughts are not as our thoughts; that we look at the outward

appearance, while He looks at the heart. Not mere professors of religion, for God tells us that though they have a name to live they may be dead. Not office-bearers in the Church, for God has told us that a man may hold the highest office, and yet be under His displeasure, and become at last "a castaway." Nothing can be clearer than Paul's words, he speaks of "them that love God." Not them that love God perfectly, or whose love is ardent, but those that love God at all. The Bible distinguishes on this matter, and tells us of "love" and of "perfect love," of "loving much" and "loving little." John tells us that love is life, that "every one that loveth is born of God," is, therefore, a child of God, so that what Paul practically says is, "We know that all things work together for good to the children of God. Yes, everything depends on our relationship to God. If we are His children, all is well; but if we are His enemies, we are under the curse, with nothing before us but eternal woe. Love brings us into harmony with God. We become "partakers of the Divine nature," and heirs of all that is good in time and eternity.

"This world is ours and worlds to come,
Earth is our lodge, and heaven our home."



The great business of life is to fit us for that home. To make us "meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light." At conversion we become children, and here our education, and training, are carried on, and all the events of providence, and grace, are being employed for this purpose. Death will effect no change in our moral nature, or in our relationship to God; it only changes our residence, and translates us from earth to "The Palace of Angels and God."

Let us then, be very careful to ascertain our true character. The declaration I am about to examine is respecting certain clearly specified people. If we belong to these people we may well rejoice; if not, we have no part nor lot in the matter.

Secondly, *Let us look at the cheering declaration, "All things work together for good."*

What a wildering maze life appears, apart from the Bible! Myriads of mighty influences seem to be at work without a settled plan, or a guiding hand. Often the wicked prosper while the righteous are in adversity and sorrow. The wicked, or the useless, live, while the holy, and useful, are hurried away. Some of the wisest of earth's sons have looked at this till they have said, "Life is a blunder," and have "praised the dead, which are already dead, more than the living who are yet alive." God's ways seem to be past finding out, all seems to be confusion, and uncertainty. When, however, we open the Bible, all this perplexity ends. We see things as God sees them, and that all is harmony and certainty; that though "clouds and darkness are round about Him, righteousness and judgment are the habitation of His throne."

The text shows us the harmony there is in God's works. First, *There is harmony of operation.* "All things work together." The agents are various, but they all act under one controlling hand. We see that not only the things that are bright and joyous, but those that are dark and painful, are serving the sovereign will of our loving Father. And that the dark and painful things are as necessary for us as those that are bright and joyous. It is so in nature. How does God provide our food from year to year? If we were not aware of His mode of producing the harvest, our fears would often plunge us into despair. In October comes, and where we expect sunshine, there come the fierce tempests. Then we are wrapped in the fogs of November, and buried in the snows of January. Then come the hard frosts of February, the wild winds of March, and the soaking rains of April. Would not our faith fail us? Should we not be ready to say, God has forgotten His promise. Seven months have gone, and we seem to be farther off

from harvest than ever! But by and by the warm sun, and soft showers, are sent, and a glorious harvest is the result. Now, what produced that joyous result? Not the fog of November, nor the snow of January, nor the frost of February, nor the winds of March, nor the rain of April. No; nor the sunshine of June, and July. Had all been fog, there would have been no harvest. Had all been frost and snow, there would have been no harvest. Had all been rain and wind, the harvest would not have come. And had all been sunshine, it would not have come; had the sun shone steadily on from October to August, all would have been barrenness and death. Hence the farmers say, "If the sky is always blue, the fields will be always brown." Yes, neither sunshine nor shade, heat or cold, could do it alone. Each is needed—equally needed; and, "working together," they produce a result over which heaven and earth rejoice. As it is in nature, so it is in grace. "All things work together." Joy and sorrow, prosperity and adversity, gain and loss, pleasure and pain. Each has a quality, and an influence, which the other does not possess; and, "working together" under the guiding hand of Him that loves us best, they will by and by produce results that will fill eternity with joy. The process is often as mysterious as in chemical experiments. In watching these, a novice will be sorely perplexed, and for a time pronounce them failures; but if he waits, till the last ingredient is added, he will be filled with wonder at the work, and admiration of the worker. So it will be with the process by which the work is effected on us. It may be long and perplexing, and we may often be tempted to complain; but if we trust the Glorious Worker, when the work is finished, we shall take our place among the great multitude around the throne, and as we join in their song of praise—

"Above the rest this note shall swell,
My Jesus has done all things well."

Second, *There is harmony of design.* God has a purpose in all His works, and therefore in His dealings with His children. What is that purpose? Their present, and eternal welfare. In all things, and in all ways, He is ever seeking our "good." Is it not so with us in our conduct to our children? We are anxious for their happiness, but above all for their good. In seeking to secure this, we often have to cross their plans, and deny their requests. Doubtless their faith in our love is often tried, and our conduct appears to be unkind. The bitter cup, the chastisement, the schoolroom, the hard and difficult lesson, the banishment, seem so little like the conduct of one who loves them. I can imagine the child saying in his heart, My father says He loves me, but it does not look like love to send me from home, to live in the midst of strangers, and doom me to spend my days in the unlovely schoolroom just when the flowers are blooming, and the fruit is ripe. Yet every father knows that it is the strongest proof of his love that he can give. That it requires far more love to punish than to pet, to send the child away, than to welcome him home. That we deny ourselves of pleasure, and put ourselves to pain for our children's benefit. That their "good" is our constant aim. So it is with our Father's dealings with us. He "doth not willingly afflict," but He loves us so well, that to secure our "good," He does not spare the chastisement and pain. Providence and grace "work together," and God will not spare us "much tribulation" to bring us into the kingdom, to wean us from the world, to make us like Christ, and meet for heaven. Thousands of God's people will have to bless Him for ever for disappointment, pain, and sorrow. It was "not joyous, but grievous, but afterwards it yielded the peaceable fruits of righteousness." So the sanctuary and the sick-chamber, the minister and the physician, the pleasure and the pain, the days of dark-

ness and the days of sunshine, the smile and the tear, the cot and the coffin, the full home and the vacant home, life and death, have all "worked together for good."

The text shows us the certainty of this. "We know," not we imagine, or hope, or even believe. "We *know*." This is one of Paul's favourite words, and is doubtless the secret of his strength. Where there is uncertainty, there will be hesitation and fear. Where there is certainty, there will be firmness and courage. So it was with Paul. He looked at the trials around him, and though they were many and fierce, he triumphantly says, "I *know* they shall turn to my salvation." And when death threatened him, he smiled at his dart, and said, "We *know* that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." And having thrown the light of heaven upon his troubles and sufferings, he sees them as they are seen by God, and says, "I reckon that the sufferings of this life are not to be compared to the glory that shall be revealed in us, for our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." So in the text he triumphantly declares, "We *know* that all things work together for good." If, then, Paul knew it, and God changes not, it is not an open question; but a glorious certainty, on which the feeblest saint may unhesitatingly, and always, rely.

Let us, however, to strengthen our faith and to cheer our hope, look for a moment at the evidence by which Paul's declaration is sustained.

First, We have the testimony of Reason. If God is our Father, and all power in heaven and earth is His, is it not certain that He will overrule everything for His children's good? If we admit the Fatherhood of God, His providential care of His children is an infallible certainty. If we, being evil, know how to give good gifts to our children,

72 THE CHRISTIAN'S JOYOUS KNOWLEDGE.

how much more shall our Father in heaven give good things to us?

Second, We have the testimony of the Bible. This is not a solitary declaration. Passages of similar import are found throughout the book. Solomon says, "I know it shall be well with them that fear God." David says, "Blessed is every one that feareth the Lord; it shall be well with him." Isaiah says of the righteous, "It shall be well with him," and we find that this word of grace "is strong as that which built the skies."

Third, We have the testimony of the Church. A cloud of witnesses are behind Paul to endorse his testimony. Jacob, and Joseph, and David, and "a great multitude that no man can number" in heaven and earth re-echo the joyous words.

Lastly, We have our own experience. Which of us can look back without adoring wonder at the way in which God has made the darkness light; and the crooked things straight, and the very curse a blessing? Have not our greatest trials been our greatest blessings? In prosperity we forget God, and neglect the Bible, and forsake the closet; but affliction has come and saved us from pride, and worldliness, and formality, and made us humble, and loving, and trusting. It has brought us to God, and given a new meaning to the Bible, and a new value to the throne of grace. Surely we cannot look back without taking our harp and singing—

"When all Thy mercies, O my God!
My rising soul surveys,
Transported with the view, I'm lost
In wonder, love, and praise."

Let this word, then, be our companion as we go out into the coming year. Changes will come, sorrows may come, but with this word we may meet them boldly, and say in the darkest day, "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God."

VI.

RELIGION BETTER THAN LIFE¹

"Thy loving-kindness is better than life."—Ps. lxxiii., part of ver. 3.

THIS will be a startling declaration to many. Something *better than life!* Life not the supreme good! There is the man that carries on his business on the Sabbath. I go to him, and remonstrate with him. He replies, "You don't think I stay at business for the love of the thing, do you? I have enough of it in six days, without wanting to be at it on the seventh. I should enjoy a drive into the country, or going to church with my family, as well as anybody; but you know a man *must* live." And so, on the plea that *life* is the supreme good, he goes on breaking God's law, setting a bad example to those around him, and risking eternal death. There is the man who is engaged in a bad business. He knows it's a bad business; he often sighs about it, wishes he was out of it, wishes he had never been in it; but finishes by saying, "But you know a man *must* live;" and so, on this same plea, he injures his fellows, offends God, and jeopardizes his own soul. There is another man who is in a legitimate business, but who does not conduct it on Christian principles. He will tell you to your face, that if he attempted to act according to the teaching of the Bible, he might as well call his creditors together, and make arrangements for going to the workhouse forthwith; and, he adds, "A man

¹ Preached at the City Temple.

must live." And so he pursues a course that grieves God, brings darkness upon his soul, dishonours the Church, and makes it a very difficult thing for an honest man to make a living. Now, to these men, and they are representatives of a large class, how startling the declaration will be, that life is not the supreme good, that there is something better than life. If this be true, these men, while priding themselves on their worldly wisdom, are egregious fools; fools who take the devil's baubles instead of the good gold of the kingdom! Let us, then, carefully examine the matter, so that when testing-times come, we may arrive at a wise decision.

First, Look at the blessing of which David speaks—"Thy loving-kindness." This is a favourite word with David: he often uses it. Let us examine it. What does it mean? It must mean something glorious, for we have two of the most beautiful words in the language used to describe it. "Love," that is beautiful,—so beautiful that God has chosen it for His own name; more I cannot say. And "kindness," that is beautiful; it is the life of life, it is the rainbow that spans this vale of tears, and it would be a dreary valley if it were gone. It is that, and that alone, that transmutes a residence into a home; for the most splendid palace, destitute of kindness, is only a residence; while the smallest cottage, full of kindness, is a home.

"Little deeds of kindness, little words of love,
Make this earth a heaven, like the heaven above."

They may exist *apart*, and then they are beautiful; for kindness is the body and love the soul; kindness the hand, love the heart; kindness the outward and visible sign, and love the inward and spiritual grace. There may be kindness where there is no love, and love where there is no chance of showing kindness. They are the perfection of beauty when they are *married*, and they are married in the

text. It is not kindness just, nor is it merely love. It is "loving-kindness." Yes, beautiful apart, but the perfection of beauty when they are married. Take an example: Here's a young man that leaves his native village, and goes up into the big town to work. While at work he meets with an accident; and bruised, and bloody, and unconscious, they bear him to the hospital. Here a stranger ministers to him; the nurse's step, and touch, and voice, are strange; but, how tenderly she watches over him, how anxiously she uses every method that suggests itself to soothe his pain and restore his consciousness! This attention is beyond price, yet it is only kindness; she has done it to hundreds before she saw him, and she will do it to hundreds more when she has forgotten that he was ever under her care. But, see, a telegram has gone to his mother. She never hesitates; she makes up her little bundle, and hastens to the station; her heart outflies the swiftest engine; she gets to the hospital, enters the ward where her boy is lying. They tell her that all attempts to restore his consciousness have failed; but by and by, when the wet cloth on his forehead has to be changed, her hand changes it, and there is something in her touch that the trained hand of the nurse never had. He opens his eyes, and whispers, "Mother!" She says, "Yes; I am here!" "Oh," he says, "I feel better now!" To be sure, he is better now; but what has made him better? The nurse's touch was the touch of kindness; the mother's touch was the touch of "loving-kindness," and it brought the lad back to life and hope again. A mother's loving-kindness is precious, all price beyond; but my text speaks of Divine loving-kindness, and what must that be? Words are lost in its presence; it is a vast, unfathomable sea, where all our thoughts are drowned. But what does it mean? The answer is not far to seek: it is the manifested presence, and friendship of God. It means true religion, and is not the word most applicable?

Will any other word describe it so well? It contains both the hand and the heart, the body and the soul of religion. For did not love devise it, and does not kindness carry it out? Is it not loving-kindness that brings the Saviour to the door of our heart, and keeps Him there amid insult and neglect? Is it not loving-kindness that follows the soul to the very mouth of hell, and pleads and strives to keep it back from ruin? And when, at last, the cry bursts from the heart, "What must I do to be saved?" is it not loving-kindness that flies to his help? Is it not loving-kindness that kisses away his tears, and puts a new song in his mouth? Is it not loving-kindness that brings him into the wardrobe, takes off the rotten rags, and puts on him the garments of salvation? Is it not loving-kindness that leads him on his journey; bringing him back when he wanders, lifting him up when he falls, strengthening him when he is weak, comforting him when he is sad, quickening him when he is faint, and, at last, leading him through the valley of the shadow of death, brings him into the home beyond, and crowns him with glory, honour, and eternal life? No wonder that with this before him David should say, "Thy loving-kindness is marvellous;" and the man that knows most about it will marvel most. "Thy loving-kindness!" May we all possess it, and enjoy it for ever!

Second, Look at the estimate which David puts upon this blessing. He says, "It is better than life." Mark you; he does not tell us what it is worth. There is a glorious reason for this. There are words made to tell the value of any palace on the land, or any vessel on the sea; but there are no words made to describe the value of religion. David takes the richest natural gift which we possess, and says, "It is better than that!" Need I stop to remind you, that by common consent we agree that life is our most valuable natural possession? "A living god is better than

a dead lion." Look at the sinner, how willingly he sacrifices wealth, honour, pleasure, friends, to save his life. The saint also puts life in the forefront. Here's a man who hardly ever goes to his class-meeting. If you speak to him, he says that, of course, he should like to enjoy communion with saints, but he adds, "Business must be attended to; and if you don't attend to your business, your business will not attend to you." And with this platitude he tries to satisfy you and his own conscience. But his health fails, the medical man is summoned, he pronounces the case to be serious; he says, "You are over-worked—you must have rest." The man says, "What do you recommend?" He replies, "Llandudno for a month; the South of France for three months; or South Africa for six months." He asks, "Will nothing else do?" "Nothing; do this and you may live; neglect this and you will die." And this man, who could not leave his business for an hour once a week, for all the blessings of Church fellowship, will leave it for six months to save his life. So that, you see, David chose our richest natural gift with which to compare religion. It may be said, "But was David an authority on this subject?" I answer, "Yes; the highest human authority that the world ever had in it."

First, He had *life*; and when I speak of life I don't mean mere existence. There is life and life. If there is not, what did that young man mean when he said to his mother, "As soon as I am out of my apprenticeship I mean to go to London"? And when his mother asked him why he could not be content to remain where his father and grandfather had lived, he replied, "I want to exist." He did not mean he wanted to exist,—he was existing where he was,—he meant there was life *and* life. And that's what I mean when I say David had life.

First, he had a splendid physical constitution; he was

"ruddy." He could meet the lion, or the bear, or the haughty Philistine. He could live in town or country, on the mountain-top or in the lowly valley. His very language conveys the idea of physical strength. He talks about "running through a troop, and leaping over the wall." This is not, therefore, the language of some poor dyspeptic, who groans out "Religion is better than life," but that of a robust, vigorous man, who could enjoy all the good things the good earth yields.

Second, he had a magnificent intellect. He was not merely a splendid animal; he was a splendid man. He was the poet of the ages. We have been singing his songs ever since he wrote them, and we shall go on singing them till the crack of doom, and, maybe, in heaven itself. Then he was "the sweet singer of Israel." He could so touch his harp as to charm the evil spirit from the morose and haughty monarch.

Third, he had a warm and loving heart. No man *lives* who has not this: your men whose lives are a platitude, who have no hills and no valleys, who never wept because some one else was in trouble, nor rejoiced because some one else was glad, may be said to exist, but they do not *live*. David had a warm and loving heart. Look at his love for Jonathan. It is the model love of man for man. Then look at his love for Absalom. Listen to that heart-broken cry that comes down the corridor of time, and which has wrung tears from the eyes of millions: "O Absalom, my son Absalom; would God I had died for thee, my son, my son!" The man that uttered that cry had a warm and loving heart.

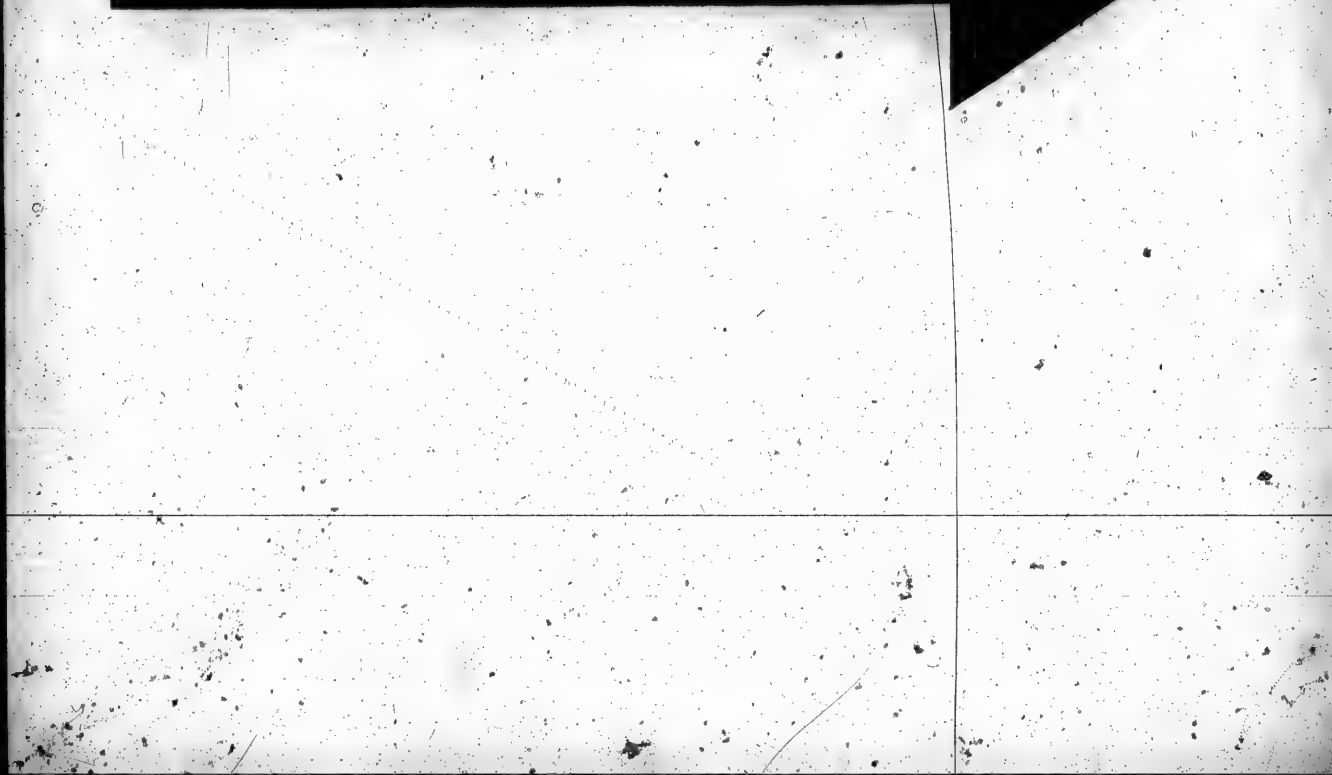
Fourth, he had the highest of earth's honours. He was the mighty and triumphant warrior; and he was the God-appointed king of the most wonderful people the world ever had on it. Now look at him—with the poet's pen, the musician's harp, the warrior's sword, the monarch's

crowd of men who enjoyed the whole of life, that says religion is better than that.

Second, *the language of religion*. This is not the language of some theorist, speaking the more strongly because he knows so little about it. And it is not the language of some young man in the joy of his first love. It is the language of one who had religion and had enjoyed it long—had enjoyed it in the sunshine, had enjoyed it in the storm, in the palace amid the homage of his people, and on the mountains, where he was like a sparrow on the housetop. Yes, and if I wanted a testimony as to the value of religion, I would not receive the testimony of some young man who has just obtained religion. I should say, "No, brother, you have a treasure, but it is infinitely more valuable than you imagine." I would let the grey hairs speak, and bid the rest be silent. And as the men stand up to testify I should say, "We can't hear you all; let the one speak who has had the most trouble since he got religion." For no man knows the value of religion till he has been in trouble; as no man knows the value of a lamp till he has been in darkness; and no man knows the value of a lifeboat, till he has been in a storm. Here, then, is the witness, and with a brave heart he says, "Religion is better than life." This witness does not stand alone. The martyrs were of his mind; they counted not their lives dear unto them, so that they might win Christ. An ever-growing multitude endorse David's declaration; and the number will increase till every soul in heaven and hell shall unite to testify that "religion is better than life."

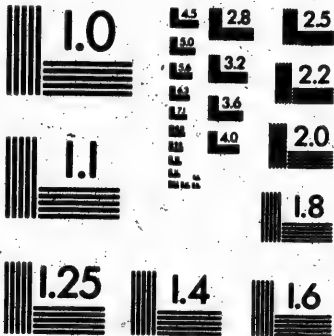
Is this treasure ours? If not, why not? It is provided for us, offered to us, pressed upon us. Why should we not receive it now? The nail-printed hand of Christ is stretched out to us. Let us grasp it, and live for ever. Do we possess it? If so, let us walk worthily. Let us





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see to it, that our lives be one long, sweet song of praise. If God has given us the best, who should we envy? If He has given us the best, why should we murmur? We may not have a few things that we should like to have, but we have heaven within and heaven beyond.

"This world is ours, and worlds to come ;
Earth is our lodge, and heaven our home."

Let us then live up to our dignity, and by our lips and lives show the reality of the blessings we enjoy.

VII.

THE ACCEPTED CALL.¹

"When Thou saidst, Seek ye My face; my heart said unto Thee, Thy face,
Lord, will I seek."—Ps. xxvii. 8.

THE question is often asked, How do men become the sons of God? Sometimes this question is asked sneeringly by those who do not believe in the possibility of such a transformation. Sometimes it is asked earnestly, and anxiously, by those who believe it possible that humanity may be so honoured, but who are bewildered as to the way in which that honour is to be obtained. They have said—"We started together, and have gone shoulder to shoulder for twenty, or, maybe, fifty years, and now there is a difference between us as wide as heaven and hell! How has this marvellous change in you been effected?" and I have replied—"Don't ask me, because I may be an impostor; go to some one of whose conversion it is impossible to doubt, and remember that when you have obtained an answer from one child of God, you have in substance received an answer from all." And so to-day I take you to David. Here there can be no mistake. We know that he was a sinner by nature, for he says he was "conceived in sin and shapen in iniquity." We know that he was a sinner by actual transgression, for his history is stained with records of the vilest iniquity; and we also know that he afterwards became a man after God's own heart, and has been made the leader of the Churches praise to the end of time. I ask you to listen

¹ Preached at the opening of the Baptist Chapel, Accrington.

to his own account of the way in which the great change was effected. It is brief, but full—so full that we may learn from it the way of salvation. He says—"When Thou saidst, Seek ye My face; my heart said, Thy face, Lord, will I seek." That is, God spoke, and I heard Him. God called me, and I came to Him. God held out His arms, and I ran into them. "Why," many of you are saying, "this is just my experience." I know it is: I care not whether you are a Methodist, a Baptist, a Churchman, a Protestant, or a Catholic; if you are a child of God, my text is your spiritual history. God's family is one, though we are called by many names, and when it comes to matters of experience our unity is at once made manifest.

The text naturally divides itself into two parts. We have first, *God's address to man*; secondly, *Man's reply to God*.

First, *we have God's address to man*—"Thou saidst, Seek ye My face." Here we have the *origin* of all true religion. It begins with God. It was so at the outset. All who know anything about quarrels among men, know that, as a rule, the offended party is generally the first to seek reconciliation, and it may well be so, for when a man knows he is in the right he can afford to be generous—to hold out his hand, and say as Abraham did to Lot—"Let there be no quarrel between thy herdsmen and mine." But whether this be true of the quarrels among men, or not, it is gloriously true of the great quarrel between God and man. Man sinned, and God was angry with man. Did He, however, wait for man to draw near to Him with a broken and contrite heart, and ask for pardon? Did He wait for man to come and confess his ingratitude and sinfulness? We know He did not. We know that if He had, our reconciliation would never have taken place, but the whole family of man would have moved on in one dark blaspheming procession to perdition. God knew this,—knew it well,—and "because He delighteth in mercy" He spoke first.

And has it struck you how soon He spoke? Did He wait till man had learnt by years of bitter experience the sinfulness of his sin? No, He did not. Blessed be His name! the first day of man's sin, was the first day of God's revelation of mercy! He who has commanded us not to let the sun go down upon our wrath acted upon His own command, and, before the end of the first day of man's transgression, He went to him, and while showing him his sinfulness and its sad results, proclaimed to him the glorious news of salvation. Thus God spoke first to our race. "The way of peace" is not an invention of man, but a revelation from heaven.

God also speaks first to every individual. I hear many people pray as if man was ready to be reconciled, and God was not. This is an immense and God-dishonouring error. Does he not say, "I stand at the door and knock"? Does He not declare that He has been there till His locks are wet with the dew of the morning? He is ever ready to receive us; and the moment the sinner draws back the bars and bolts which have kept the door shut in His face, "the King of Glory will come in." Yes—

"He now stands knocking at the door
Of every sinner's heart;
The worst need keep Him out no more,
Nor force Him to depart."

Do I hear some one saying, "But does God really speak to man? Can there be this direct intercourse between Him and us?" I answer, "Yes, He can and does." Cannot we speak to our children? Cannot the sheep on the hillside speak to their little leaping lambs. Cannot the parent bird speak to her little open-mouthed young ones? And is God the only dumb parent in the universe? He that made the tongue, can He not speak? He does speak all day long. He speaks sometimes in tones of thunder, which are like the beginning of hell to the guilty soul, and sometimes in tones

soft as a mother's blessing, which fill the eyes with tears we know not how.

Do I hear some one saying, "But I have never heard Him"? Perhaps not; that, however, may not be because He has not spoken.

I shall never forget my first visit to a woollen mill. The noise of the machinery stunned and bewildered me. The owner of the mill explained the various processes as we went on, but it was a dumb show to me—I heard nothing. Suppose when I came out I had been asked whether the gentleman spoke to me during my visit, and I had replied "No," would it have been true? Certainly not; he spoke, but I did not hear. His voice was drowned in the surrounding noise. And so it is with thousands of those around us. God speaks to them, but His voice is drowned in the hubbub by which they are surrounded. They are awakened in the morning by the postman's knock, and before they have time for a thought about God or eternity, the noise of their own mill is all around them; before the letters are finished the morning paper arrives, and the roar of the world is added to the sound which already existed; a short prayer is uttered, a hasty meal swallowed, and henceforth it is whirl and excitement till the evening; they return home worn out and weary, by the aid of stimulants they are able to spend an evening of worldly pleasure, and then a short psalm, and a shorter prayer is read, and they retire to a troubled rest to be awakened again by the postman's knock, and to go through the same distracting round. This is the history year in and year out of thousands around us—and how can God's voice ever be heard in this whirl? There will, however, come an end to this. When I was in that mill the dinner-hour came, and instantly the machinery stopped, and out of the silence came a hundred voices that had been speaking before, but had been drowned in the noise. And so it will be with us. This life is not to go on for ever.

There will come a morning when other hands will open the letters, when the newsman will be told that the paper is needed no more, when there will be sorrow and silence in the now busy home. The noise of time will be unheard: there will be the silence of eternity, and, if we neglect the offer of mercy, out of that silence will come a voice louder than thunder, which will say, "Because I have called, and ye refused; because I have stretched forth My hands, and you would have none of My reproof, I will laugh at your calamity, I will mock when your fear cometh."

The text also shows us the *nature* of religion. When God speaks to man, what does He say? The text says, "Seek ye my face." Do you ask, What does this mean? It means just this, "Come to Me." This is what God says to every man, not just "Come to My House, or My Book, or My Servant," but "Come to *Me*." When God says this, do not the words imply that we are at a distance from Him?

Some one may say, But how can this be? Do we not live and move in God? How then can we be far from Him? How? Suppose you meet an old friend, and at once go up to him to express your pleasure at the meeting, and he receives you coldly, and passes on, would you not say you met so and so, and he was so *distant*—you *met* him, and yet he was *distant*! What do you mean by that? You mean that your bodies met, but that there was no union of heart, and that is what God means when He speaks to us. He says we draw near to Him with our lips, but our hearts are far from Him. Now it is the heart that God wants, and to offer Him any substitute is an insult.

But does not God teach us further by this passage that though we are afar off we need not stay there? When He says, "Come to Me," does not that imply that there is a possibility of our coming? If there were no such possibility the invitation would be a mockery. I know that when Adam was driven out of Paradise the fiery sword was

placed there to prevent his return. But there is a beautiful passage in the ninth chapter in the Epistle to the Hebrews which says, "He hath put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself." There is a world of comfort for the trembling heart in this. But what does it mean? It is clear that it does not mean that He has put away sin as a fact, for it meets us everywhere. Nor does it mean that He has put it away as a thing to be punished. Many of you feel something of its punishment even now. Does it not mean that it is put away as the legal obstacle to man's salvation? Yes, thank God, it does. There is no fiery sword now to keep us back from God. That sword was quenched, and instead of the sword of vengeance, the sceptre of mercy is held out to the trembling penitent, that he may touch it and live for ever. True religion then is not form, or ceremony, or creed, or anything of that sort; it is something infinitely higher—it is the heart coming back to God.

Everything else instead of this, is a hollow mockery—a refuge of lies. This then is religion—the heart coming back to God. That is the first part of the subject, and before I go any further I stop to ask whether you can go so far. I beseech you do not shirk the question, Has your heart come back to God? It is a matter between you and Him: His heart has come back to you; but has your heart come back to Him? Can you

"Say by grace restored,

Now Thou knowest I love Thee, Lord"!

If you can, all is well; for you "to live is Christ, and to die will be gain;" but if not, and you remain as you are, you will be miserable in time, and lost in eternity.

Secondly, *we have man's reply to God.* God said to David, "Seek ye, My face," and the reply of the Psalmist was, "Thy face, Lord, will I seek." The answer was therefore *personal*. There is great danger in this age of companies of our losing ourselves in the firm of humanity.

But our spiritual affairs must all be done individually: we have in this sense to live alone, as we shall have to die alone, and to stand alone before the judgment-seat. You find out man's isolation when you stand, as most of us have stood, in the solemn death-chamber. How lonely the soul seems then! You remember when you stood in that quiet bedroom, and saw the father, or mother, or wife, or husband, or child go out alone. You could but watch and weep; your heart was breaking, and you longed to go with them; but your loved ones went out alone to meet their God. You and I shall have to die soon. There will be weeping eyes, and anxious, broken hearts; but we shall die alone—one last lingering look, and then we shall go alone into the tremendous realities of eternity. Just so must we learn to live alone. God speaks to each as though there were no other being in the universe, and says, "Come to Me." And each of us should answer as if there were no other, "By Thy grace I will arise and come."

The answer of David was not only personal, it was prompt. When Thou saidst. There was no talk about to-morrow or next day. The devil's policy is to cheat us out of the present. His suggestion is, any time but the present for a good deed; no time but the present for a bad one. He never talks to you of putting off sin, but he often talks of putting off prayers and conversion. He never speaks to you about sinning to-morrow. No; sin to-night, and repent to-morrow; that is the devil's policy. David knew this, and when the Lord said, "Seek ye My face," the decision was at once made, "Thy face, Lord, will I seek." And so it should be with each of us. Procrastination is full of danger. Every time we reject the offer of mercy we increase the probability that we shall never accept it. I was staying one night with an old gentleman, and when the company was gone, and we were alone, I said, "Are you on the road to heaven, sir?" With a quivering lip he

said, "No, I fear I am not." I said, "Why, that is a very terrible thing. You have been connected with the Church for many years?" "All my life," said he, "my house has been the preacher's home for more than thirty years, and none have been more welcome." I said, "It is a terrible thing to love the servants, and not to love the Master." "That has just been my case," was the reply. I said, "But has not the Holy Spirit striven with you?" "Oh, it is not God's fault that I am as I am," was the answer; "it is all my own; I recollect well, when an apprentice, the Spirit strove with me, and I put Him off till I was out of my apprenticeship. When that time came, He strove with me again, but I determined to wait until I should be my own master. When I entered into business I was again troubled about my soul, but then came the thought—I have so much to think about now; when I have made a fortune I will retire from business, and the rest of my days I will live for God." I said, "Well, you have made a fortune, and have retired; how is it with you now?" And the tears ran down his cheeks as he replied, "It is harder work now than ever." I would ask, is not that the history of many whom you have known? They never intended to go to hell; they always intended to do better, but all the time they permitted difficulties to increase, until now, with grey hairs upon their heads, they are standing on the brink of perdition.

David was prompt in his decision. "When Thou saidst, Seek ye My face; my heart said unto Thee, Thy face, Lord, will I seek." Oh, follow his example! Now is the day of salvation. Now heaven's gates are open; now the Gospel message is proclaimed; now the High Priest is pleading; now the Spirit is striving; now the Church is working; "all things are now ready;" it is God's time. To-morrow the sceptre may be turned into a sword; to-morrow the door may be shut; to-morrow your doom may be sealed;

to-morrow instead of an open heaven there may be a yawning hell. Let there be no talk of to-morrow, but say to-day, "I will arise and go to my Father."

Then the answer of David was also *decided*: "Thy face, Lord, will I seek." Many people are content with thinking about religion. I know persons who have been talking about religion for the last twenty years, but who have not got a step farther yet. They have always been thinking about joining themselves to God's people, and the devil has been laughing at them all the time. We must act as well as think. Thinking about heaven will never take a man there. "When Thou saidst, Seek ye My face; my heart said unto Thee, Thy face, Lord, will I seek."—"I will do it." And there is no presumption in that decision. It is not presumption to say "I will," if God calls me. There is nothing pharisaical in that. If God calls me He does "with the word the power convey," and though the devil, and the world, and the flesh are strong, God is stronger. He is now in our midst waiting to help you. Look up and say, "Lord, I will—happy or miserable—whether men bless or curse—whether it takes me to a palace or a workhouse, I make no conditions, I will seek Thy face." You will have to do it, if you are ever to get to heaven. Don't try to make any bargain with God, but say,

"Just as I am, and waiting not
To rid my soul from one dark blot,
To Thee whose blood can cleanse each spot,
O, Lamb of God, I come."

"I will seek Thy face."

Again, this answer was *explicit*. It was, indeed, what one of our hymns calls an echo of what God had said before. God said, "Seek ye My face:" the heart says, "Thy face, Lord, will I seek"—that is, I mean just what God means, and I do not mean anything else. People go to churches and chapels, and all the while remain unconverted because

they mean something different from God. They hide in a refuge of lies; they want to compound with God. He will never agree to that; if you are ever to be saved you will have to be saved in God's way, and on God's terms. David says, "Thy face, Lord, will I seek"—I mean what God means. If you had done the same you would have found peace long ago. But you have not. God has said, "Come to Me," and you have heard and have been troubled, and have said, "I will turn over a new leaf." God has said, "Come to Me," and you have said, "I will sign the pledge." God has said, "Come to Me," and you have said, "I will take a seat at chapel." God has said, "Come to Me," and you have said, "I will meet in class." God has said, "Come to Me," and you have said, "I will receive the Lord's Supper." But do you not see that all these may be refuges of lies? It is all very well to turn over a new leaf—the old one is blurred and blotted enough, God knows! It is all right to sign the pledge. It is all right to take a seat in chapel, to meet in class, and to kneel at the sacramental table; but it is all wrong if put as a substitute for coming to God. These thou shouldst have done, and not have left the other undone. If you have turned over a new leaf, God help you to keep it turned over; if you have signed the pledge, may He help you to be faithful; if you have taken a seat in the house of God, may He give you grace often, nay, always to be there; if you have decided to go to class, may it prove a blessing to your soul; if you come to the Lord's table, may you always meet the Lord there. But when you have done all these things you must remember that they are no substitute for your coming to God. I was going round a chapel one night during a prayer-meeting, and meeting with a lady who was in much distress, I said, "My sister, are you not saved?" She said, "No, sir; I have been a member of a church for years, but not a member of Christ's mystical body. I have

not been converted; I have not enjoyed the forgiveness of sins." "It is a sad thing," I said, "to be so long connected with the Church and not to have enjoyed the sunshine of God's smile." She said, "It is, and I cannot rest without it." Now I do not like putting a test upon people which is not directly taught in the Bible; but I knew this lady was of a proud disposition, and I said, "Are you willing to go up and kneel with those persons at the communion who are seeking mercy?" There was a moment's hesitancy, and then, lifting up her face, which was pale with excitement, she said, "I am willing to do anything if I may but find mercy." She went and threw herself upon her knees, and within five minutes I saw her raise her face—bright almost as an angel's; I went to her, and she exclaimed, "I am saved, I am saved. Oh, blessed be God, my sins which were many are all forgiven!" Brother, sister, it shall be so with thee if thou wilt thus come to Christ to-night.

Lastly, the answer came from the right place. "When Thou saidst, Seek ye My face;" my *lips*?—no, no, the lips are too often liars, but the heart never is—"my *heart* said unto Thee, Thy face, Lord, will I seek." David did not stand up and say, "I will arise and go to my Father," while his heart was alienated and his life in rebellion. The lips, perhaps, were silent, but the heart responded, Yea. Religion is heart-work.

"Words may come forth with eloquence
And claim the world's applause,
Which yet may never rise from thence
To the sky that o'er us glows.
But word, or look, or thought, which from the heart doth rise,
Like incense up to heaven shall float, a welcome sacrifice."

What the heart says God always hears. It is said of a Greek musician that his touch was so delicate and his ear so quick that he would often play a tune on his harp which

only his own quick ear could catch. Whether fact or fable, this affords a beautiful illustration of God's intercourse with man's heart. When God speaks to the heart He always gets a reply. You hear me to-night, but I shall not know, perhaps, until the day of judgment, what have been the results of this service; but when God comes He always gets an answer. God is coming to you, and is saying, "Give Me thy heart." Oh, make thy heart stop to listen to Him! God says, "Come to Me." That is not hard, is it? Yet do it, if it be hard. Let your heart reply and God will hear. He is listening—His ear is at your heart at this moment. Perhaps there is some young man here who is saying, "I will come to God. I have often thought about it, but I will do it, by the help of the Holy Spirit." If so, He hears, and will help. I was sitting one night with a farmer who said to me, "I was very happy and very miserable last night." "That is very strange," I answered. "I was," he said. "When one after another went up to seek for mercy, my heart danced for joy; but when I thought of my own children, not one of whom is yet converted, I felt as if my heart would break, I thought everybody's children were being saved but mine." One of his daughters, who was married to a neighbouring farmer, was present, and, turning towards him with a face beaming with happiness, she said, "Then you did not know what my heart said, for last night I made up my mind that your people should be my people, and your God my God." Ah, there was a father sitting in that square pew and saying, "I have laboured in vain, and spent my strength for nought;" and there was the great Father up yonder saying, "Bring out the best robe, and put it upon her, and let us rejoice and be glad." There is that father saying to-night, "Oh, if my son were but saved!" Yes, young man, and the best news you could send home would be that you had given your heart to God. In the name of your mother—in the name of your father—in the name of

THE ACCEPTED CALL.

93

those who have gone to heaven, and who are perhaps even now bending over you, I pray you to be reconciled to God. "The Spirit and the bride say, Come."

And will you not accept the invitation? Christ, who bought you with His own blood, asks you to come to Him. He says to you, "Give me thine heart." May each of you do so this night. I put the question the other day in a village service, "Who is there here that will give his heart to God?" And a little girl, with a voice trembling with emotion, said, "Please, sir, I will." I do not ask you to respond in a similar way, though I should not be sorry to hear such an answer. But let the word be spoken by the heart—let God hear it—"I will." He that seeketh findeth, and to him that knocketh the door shall be opened. "Whosoever will, let him come, and take of the water of life freely." God has never said to the seed of Jacob, Seek ye Me in vain. There are no hearts too dark, too hard, too foul, too guilty to be saved. And now, brother, standing between thee and hell, I ask thee, wilt thou be reconciled to God? Oh, by that life of sorrow which He lived, by that death of agony which He endured for thee, I beseech thee, decide to-night! We shall never all meet again on earth. I look around upon your faces, and I shall not see many of them again till we meet before the judgment bar. There will be no opportunity for me to offer mercy to you then, but I do offer it to you now—full, free, present mercy. You

"May now be saved, whoever will,
This Man receiveth sinners still."

To-night God calls you to Himself. Oh that every soul in this congregation may say, "Thy face, Lord, will I seek!"

VIII.

THE THRONE OF GRACE.

"Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need."—HEB. iv. 16.

I WAS struck by a remark made one day by a poor but intelligent Christian. Speaking of Paul's writings, he said, "There is much in them that I don't understand. I often feel perplexed to know what he means; but whenever I come to a 'therefore' I always get a blessing." There is a great deal of force in this remark. Paul's reasoning is abstruse. His argument seems, like some rivers, to disappear for a time, and then to reappear at a considerable distance; but if we follow him to his conclusions, we are abundantly repaid for our pains. To-night we are not called to follow out Paul's argument, but only to look at his conclusion; and I trust that it will be so opened by the Holy Spirit as to prove "a sovereign balm for every wound, and a cordial for our fear."

I. Look at the place of which the apostle speaks—"The throne of grace." A throne is the seat on which a monarch sits in his official capacity, and the throne spoken of in the text is that of the King of kings. The decree has gone forth that all of us must meet God. The Bible declares that every one of us must give an account of himself to God. So, then, ready or not ready, prepared or not prepared, each of us must somewhere stand face to face

with our Maker. The only question for us to ask is, *Where?* I know there are other thrones spoken of in the Bible, as the throne of glory, and the throne of judgment. But can we guilty rebels hope to meet a holy God on either of these, and live? Certainly not. Can we meet Him on the great white throne, on which He will sit by and by to judge the world? No; for sinners shall not stand in the judgment; and unpardoned sinners will then utter the wild cry, "Rocks, fall on us; mountains, hide us from the face of the Judge." Can we as sinners hope to see Him on the throne of glory in the kingdom above? Alas, no! for nothing unholy or unclean can enter there. What, then, must we do? and whither shall we fly? If there is not some other meeting-place, it had been good for us that we had never been born. Thank God! my text tells us there is another place—a throne of grace—a throne erected on purpose to be a meeting-place between a holy God, and a world of guilty sinners—and meet us without destroying us. This is the place of which the text speaks.

II. Look at the blessings to be obtained at that place. What are they? The text says, "mercy" and "grace." The two most precious words that can meet a sinner's eye or fall on a sinner's ear, and yet how they are undervalued! I don't hesitate to say that if anything else we prize was to be obtained on the same condition, there would be a long and earnest prayer-meeting to-night; and many who are strangers to prayer would at once begin. Suppose, for instance, that we could have wealth, or health, or honour, or learning, for asking, oh what earnest supplications would be offered up! And yet the blessings spoken of are as much superior to these things as the soul is superior to the body or eternity to time. We set a high estimate upon gold, and honour, and learning, and yet

every now and then we see their true value. If you want a proof, go to-night to poor Elliott, who lies in your own city under sentence of death. Enter his cell, and tell him you have brought him good news. How eagerly he turns to you and asks, "What?" You reply, "Baron Rothschild is dead, and has left you heir to all his vast wealth." Oh, with what disappointment he turns away! You tell him that in addition to this you are come to give him the highest of earth's honours. He heeds you not. He says, "What is all this to me, when I have to die on Thursday?" You say, "Man, do you turn away from boundless wealth, from broad acres, from glittering gems and jewels? What do you want?" And with eager, bloodshot eyes, he turns to you, and hisses from his clenched teeth, "Pardon! Give me that, and I'll bless you; without that, all the rest is but mockery." And so it should be with us. We are all condemned sinners. Any moment the sentence may be executed. Hence, when a sinner's eyes are opened, he turns away from all this short-enduring world can give, and cries—

"Nothing I ask or want beside,
Of all in earth or heaven;
But let me feel Thy blood applied,
And live and die forgiven."

And when he feels that he is forgiven, no wonder if he goes wild for joy. The other day, when a reprieve was borne to a condemned man, he fainted for joy, and who could wonder? And yet when we get pardon from the King of kings, men tell us to be calm, and condemn excitement. Why, if a man isn't excited then, when will he be? Angels must wonder that we are not wild with joy.

Well, then, there is pardon at the throne, for mercy is only another word for pardon. But that is not all; and, thank God! it is not all. The text says there is "Grace to help" us. Well, what a mercy this is! If there were

only pardon, then having obtained that, I would ask at once to be taken to heaven. But, thank God! our case is fully met. There is "grace to help." We shall all find that after we are pardoned there is a great work to be done, and a great battle to be fought. The past is forgiven; but now you are to be "made meet for the inheritance of the saints in light," and the war will soon begin. We have formed bad habits, and "our nature every moment waits to make our ruin sure." All this has to be remedied. The bad habits have to be given up; the defects in our character remedied. Bad tempers have to give place to good tempers; irritability to patience; covetousness to generosity; and oh, it is hard work, but grace can enable us to do it! Courage, my brother, there is "grace to help in every time of need;" but remember, you must *ask* for it. It has to be "obtained." Many try to overcome without grace, or they forget that grace is to be had for asking, and hence they fail miserably. Brother, to thy knees. Thou must be a co-worker with God. Thou canst not do His work. He will not do thine. Find out the weak place, the besetting sin, and give God no rest till it is overcome. We should carry our weaknesses to God, and ask for what we need, and we shall soon feel the advantage. God will make us good-tempered, and patient, and generous, if we ask Him. Depend upon it, there is no enemy in thy heart He cannot subdue and expel. There are many living witnesses of this in the congregation. Yes, "all, all we want is here!" Grace to enable us to work, to suffer, to fight, to live, or to die. Every time of need! These are the blessings to be obtained at the throne!

III. Let us inquire for whom these blessings are provided. The apostle says, Let "us" come. It is most important that we should know who are included in this "us." Is it an *apostolic* "us"? If so, we are not

interested. Is it a Jewish "us"? If so, we are excluded. Thank God! this also is clearly revealed. We have but to be guided by the Word of God, and we shall find that the "us," is as wide as humanity.

If you look at the preceding verse, you will see that Paul is referring to the priesthood of Christ. He says: "Seeing that we have a great High Priest that is passed into the heavens: let us *therefore* come boldly to the throne." So that the "us" of our text is just as broad as the "we" in the fifteenth verse. Do we ask how broad that is? We shall soon see. The reference here evidently is to the great day of atonement, when the high priest entered into the holy place with the blood of atonement. When that great event took place, who did the priest represent? The priests, or the elders, or the God-fearing part of the Israelites? Certainly not; but every Jew. There wasn't one of the vast multitude but would say, He is gone in as my representative, and I am accepted in Him. Now the apostle says Christ is a *great* High Priest, of whom the other was but the type. Who, then, did He represent? The answer of the Book is, All mankind. If you want to measure the "us" whom Christ represents, you can easily do it! His favourite name was not "I the Jew," but "I the Son of *Man*." When He came, the angels appeared to the shepherds, and with faces radiant with delight said, "Behold, we bring you glad tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people." When He was here, His favourite apostle, guided by the Holy Spirit, declared, "That God so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son, that we might not perish." When His great work on earth was finished, and He was ascending to His native glory, He gave His disciples the command that they were to carry the glad news that He had procured life and heaven, mercy and grace for all to all the world; and as if He thought that some day they might

limit His mercy, and think that some poor soul was beyond its reach, He added, "And to every creature." So that the "us" of the text is as broad as "all people," "the world," and "every creature." It comes to every one of us, and wraps us round like the atmosphere. And looking at it to-night, I rejoice to announce that there is not a child of man but may be a child of God.

IV. Let us inquire how these blessings are to be obtained. The apostle gives us most explicit information. He says, "Let us *come* that we may obtain;" not just admire the blessings, or praise them, or recommend them, or desire them, or ask others to pray that we may receive them; but "*come*," ay, and "*come to the throne*." Some are satisfied with coming to the *church*, but this is not enough; you may do that and perish. The church is but the ante-room; the "*throne*" is farther in. And to this throne each of us must come for ourselves, or perish; others can go for us, and even with us, but they cannot go instead of us; each of us must go for ourselves, or we can never enter heaven.

Brother, sister, I ask you in the name of my Master, the King, Will you come to-night and have pardon? will you come to-night and have grace? will you? will you now? "Oh!" I hear some of you say, "I would give the world if I could, but my sins are so many and so great, the very thought fills me with terror." I tell thee, my fellow-sinner, this is wrong; thou mayest well *tremble*, but there is no room for despair. The apostle asks thee not only to come, but to "*come boldly*," that is *confidently*; and I tell thee now that there is nothing in the world so certain as that if thou dost come thou wilt obtain both mercy and grace. Men talk about making an experiment when they come to God in prayer. It is nonsense; there is no experiment about it. The experiment was made ages ago, and the matter settled for ever. Even as I speak, millions of

witnesses on earth and in heaven are ready to cry out, "Faithful is He who hath promised, who also will do it." Fling, then, away thy paralysing fear, and come confidently to the throne. Failure is impossible. The merchant may send his vessel to distant lands, and never see her return; the farmer may sow his seed, and never know the joy of harvest; the mother, as she folds her little one to her heart, and says, "This same shall comfort me," may never lean on his strong arm, or feel his loving kiss; but never, never, never, can a child of man come to the throne of grace, and be rejected.

Is there one here to-night who fears to come? Then to him I will speak, and may the Holy Spirit help me so to reason with him that faith may now take the place of fear! Thou sayest, poor sinner, that thou art afraid to come to the throne because of thy sins. But think, first, of the *character of the place to which thou art invited*. It is not to the throne of judgment, but the throne of grace. When the cotton famine visited Lancashire, and the generosity of the people of this land was shewn as it never had been shown before, and the railways were burdened with the generous gifts of all classes, we didn't leave these treasures in the streets for any passer-by to take. Large warehouses were procured, and committees appointed to see that they were given to the proper persons. Now, suppose I had gone into the street at Preston, and met a poor operative looking thin, and poorly clad, and had asked him if he was out of work, and he had replied, "Yes, sir; and have been for two years." I say, "Then I suppose your resources are exhausted, and you can hardly find food for your family?" He answers, "No; I have neither clothes nor food for myself or them, and I don't know what to do." I say, "Why don't you go to the depôt and get what you want? There is abundance there." He says, "Ah! but, sir, I haven't a farthing left." I answer, "I know it; and

if you had, there are a hundred shops in Preston that would be glad to see you; but this is a place opened for those who have no money, and there is nobody in the world more welcome to the treasures there than yourself." And so with thee, poor sinner. This place is opened on purpose for thee. If man had not sinned he could have met God on the throne of glory; but seeing he has sinned, God has erected this throne on purpose that the guilty may come and obtain pardon and life.

Secondly, *Think of Him who is on the throne.* He is fully made known to us in the Bible; and, therefore, there is no room for a doubt. The Book says He is love, that He delights in mercy, that He is ready to pardon, that He has what we need, that He delights to bestow it. Why, then, hesitate to go to Him? Remember

"His love is as great as His power."

Flee to Him at once, and you will find that He will do "exceeding abundant above all that you can ask or think."

Thirdly, *Think of your infinite Friend before the throne.* During the cotton famine I went to many a man in need, and said, "Why don't you go to the committee and get what you require?" and the reply was, "I can't. I have never asked for help in my life. It has been my joy to give, and not to get. If I were to try to speak for myself I should be choked; I can't do it. I'll starve first." And I have said, "I don't want you to speak; I only want you to come. I will do all the talking." And at the appointed time he has come, and I have said, "This is the person of whom I spoke;" and they at once relieved his wants, and sent him home rejoicing. And so, poor sinner, it shall be with thee. Thou art saying, "I am such a guilty wretch. My sins have been so many, and so aggravated, that I dare not speak to God;" and I point to One who "ever liveth

to make intercession" for thee, and who is waiting this moment to plead for thee. Oh, go! go with thy sins, thy shame, thy tears; fall speechlessly before Him, and He will receive thee graciously, and undertake thy case. Thou shalt have a full and free pardon, and be admitted amongst the sons and daughters of the Lord Most High.

Dost thou want yet further encouragement? Then I bid thee *think of the invitations and promises that are held out to thee in God's Word.*

When our prince brought his fair bride to England, they arrived at Portsmouth too late in the evening to land. Her heart was throbbing with many bewildering emotions. What would be the reception she should have? would her husband's people welcome a stranger? and a host of other questions. As she couldn't sleep, she went out on the deck of the vessel she was in; and turning her eyes towards the shore, saw at every masthead in letters of light, "Welcome! Welcome to Alexandra! Welcome to our Princess!" And who can wonder that, as she looked, her fears fled away, and her eyes filled with tears of joy. There was no room for a single doubt as to the character of her reception. And so with thee, poor sinner. Bowed down under a sense of thy enormous guilt, thou art afraid to lift thy eyes towards heaven, or to think of God. But I bring thee glad tidings of great joy. There is mercy for thee. God invites thee to His throne. Lift thy eyes, and where thou didst expect to see the blackness of darkness, thou shalt see a thousand stars of promise cheering thee on. Look! There is one, "Come." There is another, "Whosoever." There is another, "Nowise." See how they come out, like stars at eventide, brighter and yet brighter, and every one has a message of mercy for thee. Oh, fling away thy fears! See the precious words, and come at once to the throne.

Dost thou want yet another encouragement? Then I give thee, in the last place, *the experience of those who have gone before thee*—the saved on earth and in heaven. A cloud of witnesses they stand, and they all rejoice to cry, "I called upon the Lord, and He heard me, and delivered me out of all my distresses." See the little ones when they go out with their Christmas collecting cards. There is a timid little creature looking wistfully at some gentleman's door. She wants to go, and yet is afraid; when up comes another with more courage, and goes up to the door and knocks, and the gentleman comes out and receives her kindly, and grants her request. As she comes back, the timid one eagerly asks, "How did you get on?" She replies, "He was so kind! He gave me sixpence, and said he would give sixpence to every one that came." "Oh," says the little one, "I will away;" and soon there's another applicant. Would to God, poor sinner, thou wouldst do the same! Turn to thy neighbour in the pew. There are scores of us in this congregation willing to be "Jesus' witnesses." I can say, "This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him and delivered him." Men and women of all ages, of all characters, are here; and we all went to the same throne, and we all found salvation there. Oh, go, go, whoever, whatever thou art! Look at this "therefore;" show it to thy doubting heart; show it to the enemy of souls who tries to hinder thee. Say, "Because it is the throne of grace, because a God of love is on it, because Jesus is before it, because I am invited to it, because millions have already gone there, and not one has been rejected; *therefore*—and not because I deserve anything but perdition—I will arise and go."

IX.

ZEAL FOR GOOD WORKS.¹

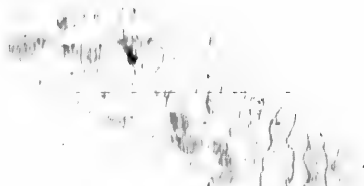
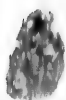
"Who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works."—
TITUS II. 14.

THOSE of you who have read that capital little book, *Ministering Children*, will recollect the scene with "Old Willie." You remember Willie was sitting at his cottage door, as he had done many a time, watching the shadows as they went stealing along, when a young girl came up to him and asked him if he didn't find the days very long and wearisome, sitting there and doing nothing? And the old man replied, "My doing days are over." "Well, then," said the child, "why not read? why read the Bible? why not read the story of your Saviour's life?" And the old man said that he didn't know how to read; he often wished that he did. The girl asked him, Had he never learned? "Yes, a little;" but he had forgotten the book he had learned. "Well, then," said she, with the eagerness of youth, "why don't you learn?" The old man said his learning days were about over, and that it was hardly worth trying. "Oh yes," she said, "you can easily learn, if you try." Would he try if she would teach him? Well, catching a little of the enthusiasm of his companion, he said he was willing to try, if she was willing to take the trouble to be his teacher. And accordingly the plan was acted upon. You recollect she

¹ Preached at the opening of the Westminster Chapel.

brought her Bible, sat down by him, and said, "Now, we will have our first lesson," trying to awaken what memories he might have of the learning of bygone days by pointing to the letter J. He found out that he knew that; and they went on to e, and then to s, and u, and a, till he could spell the word. "There," said the child, "you see that is the name of your blessed Saviour, Jesus." And the old man, as pleased as his teacher was to have got on so rapidly, went over and over again with the word "Jesus, Jesus." "Now," said the little girl, "I shall leave you, and you can look at your first lesson, and you can see in how many places you can find this beautiful word." And the old man went on eagerly with his lesson down column after column, and found the word here and there and yonder; and he made little marks, that he might show his teacher how clever he was. Here was Jesus, and there was Jesus, and he quite longed for her to come that she might see how industrious he had been. The old man goes on, you recollect, to say that by and by he could read pretty well; "but," said he, "I never forgot my first lesson, and," said he afterwards, "whenever I came to the Bible I seemed to be always looking for Jesus."

Well, now, I ask you, is not that just true, or ought it not, at all events, to be true of those who gather in God's house, as well as those who gather around God's Word? Ought we not ever to be looking for Jesus? Ought we not to be dissatisfied if we meet with everybody else and do not meet with Jesus? Ought not our language to be, when we are come here, "We would see Jesus"? And it is only in proportion as Christ is put forth before the people that they will be moved, and that the soul will be brought out of darkness into that light which God designs it to enjoy. This Book is constructed upon this very principle, that Christ should be in the forefront. Somebody has said, and very well said, that there is



not a town in England in which there is not a road to London; and so there is not a passage in the Bible from which there is not a road to Calvary. Sometimes, however, there is a difficulty in finding the road. You seem to have to go by a very circuitous path to get to it. There are other passages, however, that read so plain, that the wayfaring man, though a fool, cannot err therein; and it seems to me that my text to-night is one of these. Christ is in the very forefront of it. I was going to say, I should like to hear a man preach from my text and leave Jesus out. Jesus is in the front, in the middle, and at the end; and you have thus in these few words Christ, His work, and His design in doing that work; and if there is a poor sinner come in here to-night, I tell him he has but to get my text into his head, and through God's grace into his heart; and though he were standing on the very mouth of hell, it would lift him up to the very throne of God. God grant it may be so with some to-night!

First, then, let us look at HIM OF WHOM MY TEXT SPEAKS —THE PERSON. You will see that everything depends on this. You and I know that our views of any act will depend very much upon our views of the actor; that, for instance, some act performed by two persons occupying different positions in life, or having different relationships, will have altogether a different influence upon us, and a different aspect to us. It would be easy to show this. Suppose, for instance, you were at home, and a poor woman were to come along, worn out and weary, and were to ask permission to come in, and sit down and rest herself. You give her permission, and, as she sits there, she unburdens her heart of some of the thousand woes that have been pressing upon it. When she has refreshed herself, she rises, thanks you, and goes on her journey. Well, now, in a week that will be forgotten.

But suppose, instead of a poor woman, another woman came along, even our own dear Queen Victoria, whom may God preserve! I say, suppose that she came along. Suppose that she were weary. Suppose that she asked permission to come in and rest herself. Would that be forgotten next week or the week after? Would it not rather be the event of your life? Would it not till your latest day be a pleasure to tell how the Queen of England had entered your house, had sat in that chair, and had said this, and that? Here then, you see, is the same act, performed by two women, but the difference in the position of the person makes all the difference in your estimate of the act. Now, my text tells us that somebody has done something for us. Our first question, of course, is, Who is that somebody? If it is a person of no position, of no influence, we should say it was very kind, but it was a very great waste. If some person of no position and no influence should give himself, even give himself to death for us, we should say that this was a proof of his love, but we should remain just where we were before that wonderful act had been performed. But if we find out that the person who has done this, occupies such a position that he cannot perform an inconsiderate act, and that whatever he does must be of infinite value, then at once we shall recognise the importance of the statement in the text. So, then, I ask, Who is it of whom the text speaks? Like the old Pharisees, I would cry, "Who is this? who is this?" And, thank God, we have not to go far for an answer. I look at the preceding verse, and I read this, "Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for us." There is the answer, Jesus Christ! Thank God, not a strange name to us, not a name that we hear to-night for the first time. It is a name that has been upon the tongues of men for ages, and they have not done with it yet. It is

a name that has but to be spoken to-night to make a million hearts throb the faster. It is a name that has but to be whispered into the ear of the dying to make the eye unclose, and the tongue to speak again. It is the last name the saint whispers on earth; it is the first name he shouts in heaven. This is He, of whom the text speaks, "Jesus Christ gave Himself for us." Do you still ask, Who is He? I refer you to the Book—the Book so full of Christ. Who is He?

"Join all the glorious names
Of wisdom, love, and power,
That ever mortals knew,
That angels ever bore:
All are too mean to speak His worth,
Too mean to set our Saviour forth."

He is the mighty God—He is the Prince of the kings of the earth, God over all, blessed for evermore—He! He! He! gave Himself for us. Oh that we could but believe it! If when we thought of the cross we also thought of the crown! If when we thought of the sacrifice we remembered also the infinite value of that sacrifice, how our hearts would leap for joy, and how unhesitatingly we should commit ourselves for time and eternity to His merciful care! Here, then, I say, is the first thought in the text: *The Person* is JESUS CHRIST.

Secondly, let us look at HIS WORK. What has He done? The answer is very brief, but very complete, and very encouraging to every penitent soul. "He gave Himself for us." There is His work. You have a few short words, but you have the whole Gospel wrapped up in them. Oh that I had the power to bring out all that is hidden in these wonderful words! Let us look at them. May the Spirit help us! First, you will see that this work was *voluntary*. "He gave Himself." Voluntary; how could it be compulsory? I ask, Who could have dragged Him

from His throne? Who could have wrested the sceptre from His grasp? Who could have torn the diadem from His brow? High o'er the angelic bands He reared His consecrated head; and there, with the Father before the foundation of the world, He looked down upon us—lost, ruined, perishing. He saw—oh, there is as much theology as there is poetry in this, and I love to let my very heart utter it!—He saw, not He heard, He saw—saw what? A world of rebels. Saw what? Every thought and inclination of man's heart in rebellion.

“He saw, and—O amazing love!
He flew to our relief.”

The text says, “He gave Himself for us.”

And then it was not only voluntary, but *substitutionary*. He gave Himself for us—instead of us. Just take that idea, for that is the teaching of the text. Instead of us, substitutionary. Oh, I love to think of this, that all Christ did He did for me. You ask, How big is this *us*? and unless you have got clear notions of the extent of the *us*, you will never catch the full benefit and extent of the text. I ask, then, How big is the *us*? And I come to the Book for an explanation. How big? Gave Himself for us—for us. But, I ask, How many are there included in that *us*? and the answer that comes from this Book, I say, is “every man,” “all men,” “every creature,” “the whole world.” There you have the measure with which to measure it. And now, with these thoughts before you, look again at my text, and see how it wraps round every one of us. “He gave Himself for us.” I look down at this congregation: “For us.” What, not one excluded? No. I go out among the teeming multitudes in this city: “For us.” I go home, and look at my little ones, and say, “For us.” I cannot find too few; bless God, I cannot find too many. I see it stretching out, reaching to all nations, and peoples, and tongues; and if to-night I could gather all Adam's sons

before me, and if I had a voice to reach them all, unhesitatingly would I utter the words of the text, "Jesus Christ gave Himself for us."

But if you want to realize the full blessing of this declaration, you must, instead of having it expanded, you must—shall I say so?—have it condensed. I believed in the universality of the atonement long before I believed in its individual application to myself. I was perfectly willing to discuss the matter with any of my young friends, and some of them entertained very opposite notions, and many a long discussion did we have, and of course it left us just where it found us. The thought that brought salvation to my own heart was not that He loved everybody; it was that He loved me. Instead of spreading the sunshine over the world, and making it all beautiful, I got the sun-glass of faith, and I held it up before the Sun of Righteousness, and I concentrated the rays upon my own heart; and that heart, which was so cold, soon got warm, and where there had been darkness there was a holy flame enkindled; and the cry of my heart was, "He loved me, He gave Himself for me." As an article of our creed, we believe He died for every one; but as an act of our faith, we must believe that all He did He did for us. I like to go through the Gospels with that thought in my mind. And if there is one here who has not found peace with God, I would ask him to do that. Go through the history of Christ and say, "He died for me, for me, for me, for me, for me." Just be selfish in your reading for once. "Don't give it to the heathen yonder. Bring it all in for your own heart. Then joyously sing—

"I the chief of sinners am,
But Jesus died for me."

"He gave Himself for us." Do you ask me what there is wrapped up in that word "gave"? It is a wonderful word. It is so full that no human mind can understand all there

is there. You have the whole story of Christ in that short, sweet, simple expression, "He gave Himself." Yes, it begins at the manger—and it ends at the cross. It follows Him all through life. All His wonderful life is wrapped up in this blessed utterance, "He gave Himself for us."

Then there is the third clause. We have looked at the Person, Jesus Christ. We have looked at His work. We have seen it to be voluntary, and we have seen it to be substitutionary. We want, in the third place, to look at His DESIGN IN DOING IT. Why did He do this? Why leave His Father's throne above and wrap Him in our clay? Why did the King of Glory become a Man of Sorrows? Why all this? And here is the answer, "He gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." Let us dwell upon this for a time—His design in doing this work. First, the text says, "that He might redeem us from all *iniquity*." What do we understand by that? There is a possibility of our using what I may call theological words without having the meaning distinctly before us which those words were meant to convey. It is very possible for us to talk about "regeneration" all our lives, and yet have nothing like a definite idea of the meaning of the word. So we may talk about "justification," and we may talk about "sanctification," and it is possible for us to talk about "redemption," and yet not thoroughly understand it. I dare say our young friends here have found out already, that the best way to ascertain if we really know a thing is to try and teach it to children. We then soon find out that we have taken a great deal for granted; and it is just so with these terms. If I talk to a lot of children, it is easy to say, "Jesus Christ gave Himself for us, to redeem us from all iniquity;" but I should not by these words convey any very distinct idea to a child's mind. The child would be likely to say, "But what does redeem mean?" You see I want a synonym.

I want another word or some more words that I can use instead of this, which a child can understand. Just so it is with us to-night; and so it is always. Well, I ask, What does this word redeem mean? If you will allow me to put a substitute that does not cover the whole ground, I admit, but that covers enough ground for our purpose to-night, I should put the word "deliver." Now, the child can understand that, and I want you to understand it; and I want you to understand that Jesus Christ gave Himself on purpose that He might deliver you and me. There is the text, then, "Who gave Himself for us, that He might deliver us from all iniquity." Not just that He might form a party; or that He might be preached about, and admired: not that. Not just that His praises may be sung in beautiful music; or that churches may be built to His honour and glory. For something far beyond all that, and something that has a distinct and direct reference to every one of us: "Who gave Himself for us, that He might deliver us from all iniquity."

Let us look at it. How are we to understand it? I need not go over the whole ground, but merely glance at it. You and I are born in sin. You and I are therefore under condemnation. We talk very often, as if we were to be condemned at the judgment day; but the Book says we are condemned already. The sentence is passed upon all, "for that all have sinned." We are under condemnation; that is our state by nature. We are, in short, legally dead; and the world is our prison-house, where we await the day of execution. Now, you know very well that when a man is accused of murder, for instance, he is placed in the dock. The trial ends, the verdict is brought in, "Guilty." The judge stops, and asks the prisoner if he has anything to say? So long, that man has a legal life; but now the judge puts on the black cap, and then the sentence of death is pronounced; and the moment that sentence of death is

pronounced that man's legal life ceases. He cannot make a will. If Rothschild himself were to die, and leave that man his property, the law would say, "There is no such man; that man ceased to live in the dock yonder; that man has a physical life, but not a legal life." Now, I ask, what is to be done? I remember going down to Lancaster some years ago, and when I got out at the station a gentleman said, "Do you know who that is?" pointing to a rather short, thick-set man who was walking just in front of me. I said, "No. Who is it?" He said, "That is Calcraft; he is come down for the execution to-morrow;" and pointing to the little portmanteau he held in his hand, my friend said, "That is to take away the prisoner's clothes in, because nothing belongs to the prisoner after he is condemned." Mercy says, we will lend you the clothes till the day of execution; mercy says, we will give you your food; but the law does not know such a man; the law does not acknowledge his existence—he is dead. And now, my brother, that is the condition of every one of us by nature. We are under sentence; and any moment we may go quick down into hell. Every moment we live, while we are in rebellion, is by permission of God's mercy—is an exercise of that love which in a higher degree gave Christ to die for us. Here, then, is our state: we are in prison; you and I are in prison; we are under condemnation, having a physical life, but no legal spiritual life; and there can be none until the throne interferes. Thank God! the throne is above the bench. Thank God! when Moses dooms us to death, the King may grant us pardon. Now, what do we want? We are in prison—what do we want? Access to the throne, and a plea to urge when we get there. I ask, Have we any such plea by nature, or any such access? You know we have not. Have I any plea to urge as a sinner when I go to God? Can I say that I am not guilty? I cannot. My heart condemns me, and "God is greater

than our heart." Can I say I didn't know what I was doing, or that I was compelled to do what I did? I cannot. Mine was a voluntary act. I broke the law, and here as a criminal I await the day of execution. Jesus saw this. The prison door was locked; the beautiful world that He meant for a temple was turned into a dungeon; man was locked in, and God and His mercy, so to speak, locked out; and then it was that Jesus came, as you and I sing—

"In the devouring lion's teeth,
Torn, and forsook of all, I lay;
Thou sprang'st into the jaws of death,
From death to save the helpless prey."

He took upon Himself our nature, became our representative, took the keys of our prison-house into His hand, into a bleeding hand, and then, flinging back the bolts, He opened the door, and said, "It is finished;" and then ascended to heaven, that He might be ready to present our cry for mercy when we were prepared to offer it. But, I ask, what was done? What was done when Jesus died? What was done when Jesus ascended? Were we delivered? No; we were only put within the reach of deliverance. Before that, we could not approach the throne, and pardon could not come to us; but now the door is open, and any child of man, anywhere, may through Christ approach the Father, and may ask for the forgiveness of his sin. Yes, the prison door is opened, but we are not delivered.

The text says He gave Himself to *deliver* us; not just to open the door, but to deliver us. Man may be in prison with the door open; and if the man is in bondage, though the door is opened he cannot get out. That is just our position by nature; that is where we are if we leave off just at the cross. The door is open, the door is open, and

we may thus draw near to God. But there is something else to be done. What is that? By the direct interference of the Holy Spirit we are to be taught that we are in bondage. We do not know it. The fact is, many of us have had the chains on so long that we have begun to be proud of them. The devil has gilded them, and tried to persuade us that they are gold; and men glory in their shame. They clank the chains, and think the sound is sweetest music. Are there not tens of thousands around us to-night in London who think that their sins are their ornaments; who fancy, because they can swear, because they can cheat, because they can lie, because they can fight, that we ought to take our hats off to them? Ay, and was there no such feeling as that in our own minds once? I ask you to press the question home upon your heart. Were you never proud of your worldliness? Were you never proud of your sinfulness? Did you never shake your chain and ask people to admire it? You know. Well, Jesus ascended, and the door of the prison-house was opened. Then the Holy Spirit came; and it is the work of the Spirit to complete the great work which Christ commenced. How does He do it? The very first thing the Holy Spirit does when He comes to a man is to take the gilt off his chain, to make him feel that he is in bondage, to make the iron enter into his soul, to make him conscious of his state, and so to hate his slavery that he is willing to be saved in God's way. Oh, it is a new era in a man's history when he begins to see that he is a slave! He has been accustomed to sing, "Britons never shall be slaves;" to say, that slaves cannot breathe in England. Has he not been talking over and over again about the power he possesses, and about his being a free agent? But, oh, what a change takes place when he really finds he is a slave of the devil, and when he can use the beautiful language of the Church of England, and say he is tied and bound with

the chain of his sin! Brother, have you ever found out this? Have you ever found that you are led captive by the devil at his will? Have you ever found out that unless God Almighty interferes for you, there is nothing for you but sin here, and damnation hereafter? Have you never found this out? If you have, thank God for it. If you have not, oh, cry aloud to-night that the Spirit may come to convince you of sin! When the Spirit awakes a man, he begins to be ashamed of his sin, he begins to find that he is not quite so strong as he thought he was; he makes up his mind he will be a better man. I believe in nine cases out of ten, when a man awakens to the fact that he is a slave to sin, he is unwilling to be saved by Christ. You and I are never willing to be saved by Christ, till we find we cannot be saved without Him. No, no. Fling a rope's end to a man who can swim, and he won't thank you. It is the man that is drowning who thanks you for the rope, and he clutches it for very life; and so with one who thinks he can save himself. He says, "I feel my temper *does* master me; I feel my pride, my lust, my passion *do* master me; but I will conquer myself." And he sets to work to snap the chain, or perhaps he fancies he has got a file that can cut it, and he sets to work to try to cut his chain, and to get out of his bondage.

I know how it was in my case when I woke up to the fact of my being a slave. It was just after I had become a teetotaller, and I was then very proud of my pledge, and I had a notion that that pledge would enable me to do anything; and I thought, "Well, now, I have but to promise that I will never yield again, and of course I shall be free." I thought it was a patent file that would cut off all the bonds of the devil: so I made my vow. I had a great deal of trouble with my temper, and I made a vow that I would not yield to it. I solemnly promised and signed my name to it. What was the result? I daresay all of

you have made the same experiment, and with the same result. It did all very well till the temptation came; and then my vows were as empty as air, and my promises, I broke them again. I tried and failed, and tried and failed; and then, instead of presumption, the devil almost drove me to despair, and I thought, "Well, I never can be saved; even God Himself could not save me." And then it was—just when despair came—that I saw light in the darkness, and heard a voice saying, "Look to Me and be saved." Oh, brother, have you ever got there? Have you ever felt yourself to be a slave? Have you ever tried and failed, and tried and failed, till the devil has led you to say, It is no use trying; there is no hope, therefore after my idols will I go? Have you ever got there? Ah, brother, if you have, I trust you will go farther! When despair takes hold of a man, then there is hope for him; and, thank God, there is hope for any man out of hell.

I was down in Yorkshire in January, and a man came to God's house just to insult us. He came in order that he might take notes of what was said, that he might go away to an infidel gathering and make use of them; and he showed me his note-book afterwards, and said, "I wrote until I could not write any more for my tears;" and when at last we concluded, he came into the vestry, for his heart was broken. When they went home and told his mother of the incident, and that he had been with me, she said, "It is of no use for Mr. Garrett to spend any time over my lad; he is so bad that even God Himself could not save him!" Thank God, he is saved now! He is now a member of the Church. From that hour he was changed. He signed the pledge, we went together and sought mercy for him, and there he is now rejoicing in God's forgiving love. Ah, despair had come to him, and he had felt his utter helplessness and hopelessness! He

told me, "I have stood in a pulpit and preached; I have light enough in my head to guide a nation to heaven, and yet here I am with the blackness of darkness about me." And so despair came to him first, and then, thank God, light and salvation came! And if there is a soul here that has felt the bondage, and is feeling it—if the iron is entering into your soul, I say, Brother, now go farther.

He gave Himself that He might deliver us; not that He might just teach us; for, I ask, what is the good of teaching those who cannot hear? Not merely to set us an example; for what good is an example to those who cannot imitate it? He gave Himself to give light to our minds, to give grace to our hearts, to give freedom to our souls. He gave Himself that He might deliver us. Oh, I never shall forget the day when Jesus took my sins away! I remember I was in the iron furnace. At that time I would have given my right arm if I could have sung that verse, "My God is reconciled;" but though I began it I could not sing it. For three months I had been in the horrible pit, and I tried over and over again to say, "My God is reconciled;" but I always stopped short. And then one Saturday morning, away from all influences that produce enthusiasm, surrounded by the world, I saw what my text speaks of: how Jesus Christ had taken my place, how He had suffered in my stead, how He had become my representative, how He had risen from the dead, how He had taken possession of heaven in my name, and was there pleading for me; and I believed it with my whole heart; and before I knew well what I was saying, I cried out, "My God is reconciled;" and, blessed be God! it is so to-night. "My God is reconciled, His pardoning voice I hear." Not by works of righteousness, but by grace are we saved through faith. Brother, look to Christ to-night from the seat where thou art sitting; look to Christ, I say, and

thou wilt understand the meaning of that little revival hymn—

"Soon as my all I ventured
On the atoning blood,
The Holy Spirit entered,
And I was born of God."

He gave Himself to deliver us. Here we are, then, those of us who believe in Christ: our chains are snapped; we are not led captive of the devil now; we are conquerors, we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us.

But then my text goes on further, and tells us not merely that the chains of our sin may be broken, but that they may *be taken off*. It appears to me that there is the true Methodist ring about my text. Some of our friends say, "Yes, the chains are broken, but then the fragments are left; there are sin's remains." Am I to carry these broken chains with me to the grave? Am I never to be freed from them? I don't like them. When I try to fight, they weigh down my hands; when I try to run, they cling around my legs; they fling me down again and again. I wish I could be entirely free. I long for it. Can it not be? There are some of our friends who say, "No; you must carry these broken chains with you to your grave." I say, I don't like that. What sin is it that Christ cannot save us from? Is it the love of the world? Oh no! for "if any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." Well, then, is it malice? No; for "if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses." Well, then, is it pride? No; for "pride goeth before destruction." I ask, Who is to save me from all these things? and the answer is, Christ. What! I say; can Christ save me from these great sins, and are there some little ones He cannot save me from? Can He tear up the stalwart oak, and not

the tender sapling? Can He snap the cable, and not break the small cords? No! no! God has "laid help upon One that is mighty;" and "He is able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by Him."

" Let others hug their chains,
For sin and Satan plead,
And say, from sin's remains
They never can be freed :
Rejoice in hope, rejoice with me,
We shall from all our sins be free."

God grant it may be so to-night. "Who gave Himself for us, that He might deliver us from all iniquity."

And then it says, "And purify unto Himself a *peculiar people*." To deliver us from all sin, and then not to fling us out and leave us as a mob, but to gather us into one, to separate us unto Himself! Think of this. Christ came to be the head of a new party. That party has a great many distinctions, and yet it is only one. Christ's party is not divided in that sense. We have but one Head. That Head is Christ. He gave Himself for us that He might separate us to Himself. Yes! we may talk about Luther; we may talk about Calvin; we may talk about Wesley; we may talk about Whitefield; but Christ is the head of His body, and Christ's name is above all other names. We lower our regimental flags when we come under the Royal Standard. So we do here. Christ is the head! Christ is the head! I hear some of our friends, when they are in the warmth of their love and zeal, say they are willing to have "Methodist" written upon their coat-backs. Well, I don't know but that, if it would do any good, I should be willing as far as that is concerned to have Methodist written upon mine; but I say to our friends, Take care, if you have Methodist written upon your coat, that it is upon your week-day coat. There are some folk who have it written upon their Sunday best, but if you are

to have Methodist written on your coat at all, have it on the coat in which you play with your children; have it on the coat in which you buy and sell. Let it be on the coat in which you ride in a railway carriage, and in which you do your business, and mingle in society; and if you have not your Methodism written on your week-day coat, brush it off your Sunday best, and wait until you can have it on all, or else it will do more harm than good. But there is a name better than that—the name of Jesus itself—written on the forehead and in the heart. Brethren, is Jesus' name on your heart, and on your forehead? I do not ask you whether you are Methodists; there is something far higher than that. I do not ask you to which regiment you belong; but I ask you, Do you belong to the army? I do not ask you which name you bear; but are you loyal to the King, who gave Himself for us, that He might separate us to Himself as a peculiar people? Brethren, can you say to-night—

“Tis Jesus, the First and the Last,
Whose Spirit shall guide us safe home;
We'll praise Him for all that is past,
And trust Him for all that's to come”?

Can you say—

“To me that bleeding love of His
Shall ever precious be!
Whatever He to others is,
He's all in all to me”?

God give you grace to say it!

“Separate to Himself a peculiar people.” He is the Master, and we are the servants. He gives the commands, and we obey them. We walk in His ways, and breathe His Spirit. We copy His example, and become every day more like Him; and in a wicked world a man that does this must be peculiar. The man that is most like Christ will be most peculiar. Would to God we were all more

peculiar! Ah, my friends, some of us have got so near the world that we hardly know whether we are in the Church or not! Come nearer to Christ. Be like Him. Drink into His Spirit. Copy His example. Then it shall be well with thee.

"A peculiar people, zealous of good works." Yes, they are delivered from evil; they are drawn to Christ; and now they are to be like Christ, going about doing good. Not just doing good works, but glad to do them. There is an impelling power in a Christian that won't let him be idle. My young friends, was not the very first impulse of your renewed heart an impulse to work for Christ? When you were brought to the Saviour you did not want anybody to tell you to go and do good works. We talk about the enthusiasm of the young Christian. Why do we talk about his enthusiasm? Because he is apt to be surrounded by a lot of icebergs, that threaten to freeze him to death. But, brethren, if we were to keep our original enthusiasm, and grow in this grace, as well as in others, depend upon it the world would soon feel the effect. Let a man come to Christ, and he will follow Christ's example. Some people seem to be separated to Christ, but they are not zealous for good works. They are zealous for frames and feelings: they are exceedingly anxious to be happy. They go about asking somebody to make them happy, and then, as they say, they want to sit and sing themselves away to everlasting bliss. It is only selfishness all this. Christianity makes a man care more about being useful than being happy.

If I have Christ in my heart, then I shall have a sympathy with the perishing about me, and I shall be willing to make any, and every, sacrifice in order to save them. "Zealous for good works." That is just what we want now. Why should there be zeal for worldly objects and apathy in the Church? Why should politicians be

zealous, and the Church be apathetic? Why should men of business be zealous, and the Church be cold? I ask, Why should those who engage in our moral and social movements all be energetic and we apathetic? We have fire everywhere else, and we want fire in the Church. "Zealous for good works." The type of the Christian is a man going to God and asking Him, "What wilt Thou have me to do?" I had a capital illustration of this on Christmas morning. One of my customs—and it is a custom that has been blessed to my soul—is that of preaching before breakfast on Christmas morning. I always do it, and have always had a blessing. On the last occasion I noticed a gentleman sitting in the chapel with whose face I was not familiar; and I thought by his expression that he was a German. We got through the service, and were blessed with the presence of God's Spirit. The next morning that gentleman sent for me. I went to him, and found that he was a Churchman, but had been attracted by the early morning service; and while standing in the chapel the Holy Spirit had shown him his sins; and he had gone away from that place feeling he was a bondsman and a slave. "Oh," he said, "I wish I could have met with some Methodists who would have taken me down to Oldham Street love-feast, for I did not know what to do. While others were happy all that Christmas Day I was in my bedroom pleading with God to have mercy upon me; and at last, thanks be to His name! He heard my prayer, and He delivered me, and now I have sent to you, and wish to tell you first what God has done; and in the next place that, having obtained deliverance myself, I feel I must set to work to help others, for I have already lost a good deal of time."

If he had repeated twenty catechisms to me he could not have more thoroughly convinced me of his Christianity than by that practical confession of his creed. He told

me that his great danger was in the direction of strong drink. I did not say a word about drink in my sermon; but the Holy Spirit had been at work, and had convinced him that, if necessary, he must cut off his right arm, and that he must now care for others who were suffering like him. It was then only ten o'clock, and he told me that he had sent for me to tell me that he had already invited every drunkard in Cheetham Hill to breakfast on New Year's morning, in order to have an opportunity of talking to them, and of trying to save them. I felt that was the right thing. The man was going to work. He had a sympathy with those who were down, and now, he himself having been raised up, he was determined to exert himself on behalf of those in bondage. He told me that he had been on the verge of hell, but now seemed to be at the portal of heaven. About sixteen men were brought together at his invitation, that I might talk to them. He occupied the chair, and told them that he had invited them that he might tell them what God had done for him on Christmas morning. He said:—"I was a slave. I went to God's house; and there I heard the words of love and mercy. I saw my sin, and I saw my danger, and I saw what there was before me; but saw likewise how willing Christ was to save me, and I went to Him, and, blessed be His name! He has saved me. And He who has saved me is willing and able to save anybody, and I just tell you this; and now I leave it with Mr. Garrett to talk about the way."

This care which he showed for the afflictions of others was just the result of his Christianity, and just what we are anxious to see evinced in the case of all those who are brought to Christ; no longer asleep, but awake; no longer slaves, but free, and their whole being dedicated to God and to good works—body, soul, and spirit entirely consecrated on the altar to the service of Him who

redeems us. This is the want of London. For my part, I wonder how some of you good folk keep your religion at all here: It is bad enough in my town, but I have thanked God again and again to-day that my life has not been cast in London. Unless you keep the holy fire burning, I don't know what is to save you amidst influences so adverse, and with so many things tending to destroy your spirituality; so many things calculated to take you from your Bible, and from your closet, and from communion with God. If you don't mind, the fire will go out, and there will only be left an altar with some smoking embers instead of the bright flame which used to burn there. We want men to be zealous for good works, and not so frequently to hear, "I pray thee have me excused," when we go to them, to ask for their sympathy and aid. I have gone before now to a man of this class, and have asked him how the Sunday school is getting on in their place, and he has said, "Well, I don't know much about the Sunday school; that is not just in my line; Mr. So-and-So will be able to tell you about that, as it is quite a hobby with him." "Well, then," I have said, "how is the Tract Society getting on?" "Well, I am not quite sure whether we have a Tract Society now." "Oh, indeed! well, how is your Band of Hope?" "Well, I don't just see 'eye to eye' with you on the temperance question." Ah, this is not being zealous for good works! I think we have a right to expect a man to be zealous for some good works. I can forgive a man if he is labouring in one department, while I devote my energies to another. I can do with anything rather than this doing nothingism. We want Christians to work, every man looking after his neighbour's welfare. How can a woman be better employed than in visiting and telling other women of Christ? If our young girls went out seeking to win other young girls; and if our men of business, and our young men, went out, and lent their influence

to win other men of business and other young men, and to bring them in, the Church would marvellously increase.

The other day I was at a railway station with a friend, and looking at a couple of engines. As we were talking, the engine-driver came up, and I remarked, "We have just been admiring the engines; very splendid ones they are. I should think they are just alike." The man looked at me significantly. "Yes; they are much alike outside, but that one there has no fire burning, and it cannot even move itself; but this one here has the fire burning and the steam up, and I am just going to jump upon it, and you will see it run away with the whole train behind it." Well, I thought, there is just that difference between the formalist and the true Christian. The formalist is to all appearance a splendid engine; but there is no fire, and the steam is not up. The Christian may not be so powerful-looking or so showy, but then the fire is burning, and the steam is up; and while the one cannot help himself, the other will by his zeal affect a whole neighbourhood. Oh, if we go away with a holy fire burning, and with this zeal go into our warehouses, and workshops, and barracks, and to our professions, telling of the dear Saviour we have found, we shall soon see a marvellous change in Methodism, and a new life enkindled throughout the universal Church.

I have only to ask you, Has the text been accomplished in your case? Brother, Christ has done His part; have you done yours? Christ has given Himself for you. Bear with me for a moment. I would begin with our dear young friends here, and ask them. You, my brother, and you, my sister, are you delivered from sin? Are you delivered, or are you a slave to-night? Brother, if the end should come to-night, I ask, what is there before you for the morrow? I was in Cornwall a fortnight since, when that terrible

accident happened at Camborne. You remember those young girls who were suffocated at Dr. Smith's factory. Most of those young girls belonged to us. Two of them belonged to the choir. On Good Friday they had been in their place in the singing-pew; on Saturday they joined another choir up higher. One of them, when she came out of chapel, went up to Miss Smith, and said, "Oh, Miss Smith, I feel as happy as if I were in heaven!" God had saved her only the week before: she little thought that next day she would be in heaven. Ah, we know not what a day may bring forth! Grey hairs will not be a crown of glory to us all. It is of no use to conceal it, that some of you in early life will pass away. But oh to feel that one's name is written in heaven, and to be able to say, as Matthew Mead said when dying, "I have done my day's work, and I am going home, as every honest man ought to do when his work is done; and, thank God, I have a good home to go to!" There is no sting then. Brethren, are you delivered from sin? does passion conquer you? does appetite conquer you? does ambition conquer you? does envy conquer you? does lust conquer you? Is the bond upon your soul to-night, my brother? If so, cry to God for help, and help will come. Thank God, you may be saved now, you may be saved while I speak. If you are willing to be saved on God's terms, then I offer you a full and free salvation. Do I hear some of you say, as poor Robert Burns said when he was told this, "It is too good to be true; it is too good to be true"? Is there some one who has come in here, who has spent a life of thirty or forty years, and who is saying, "Do you mean that the sins of a lifetime can be pardoned in a moment?" Well, I do mean that, I do mean that. "Ah," you say, "that is too easy a way." Too easy, brother, too easy? I was standing the other day down at the foot of the Blackstone-edge, and I looked at that hill as it rose up between Lancashire and Yorkshire. Now, suppose some-

body had put us there fifty years ago, and had said, "Go through that hill in five minutes." You would have said, "Five minutes! No, not in five minutes, nor five hours, nor five days; nobody ever went through that hill, and nobody ever can." But wait, wait till the line is projected, wait till the navvies come, wait till they with their strong arms scoop out the tunnel, wait till the lines are laid down, wait till the locomotive is formed, and now, as it comes puffing up, jump in, and you are through in five minutes. You see how this is. All the hard work was done before you got there, and just so it is with our getting to heaven. Thank God, the hard work was done long ago! It is now easy for you, my brother. It was hard for Jesus: He gave Himself for you. Look at His agony; see Him sweat great drops of blood; see Him in the garden crying. Brother, sister, is it too easy? Thank God, it is finished! and now: "to him that worketh not, but believeth, his faith is accounted to him for righteousness." Oh, believe in His dignity, believe His infinite merits! Before you go to the cross, go and stand before His throne; and then, as you gaze on the cross, you will understand what the poet meant when he said—

"Were all the sins that men have done
Since worlds were made and time begun,
In will and word, and thought and deed,
Laid on one guilty sinner's head,
The blood of Christ, that crimson sea,
Would take the guilt of all away."

God help us to believe it!

X.

THE NEW SONG.

“And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the Mount Zion, and with Him an hundred forty and four thousand, having His Father's name written on their foreheads. And I heard a voice from heaven, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder: and I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps: and they sang as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four beasts, and the elders: and no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth.”—Rev. xiv. 1-3.

THERE are very few of us that set anything like a right estimate upon the Bible. We have it beautifully bound. We give it to those we love best; we form societies, contribute our money, and send it to others, and yet I say there are very few who set a right estimate upon it. But what should we do without it? Have you ever asked yourself that question? if not, ask it now. Forget what I am going to say, and look that question straight in the face—what should we do without the Bible? Shut up the Bible, and shut up with it all the light which has been borrowed from it, and what do we know that is worth knowing? What do we know about ourselves? what do we know about the history of the world in which we are placed? what do we know about God, and our relationship to God? what do we know about the future? Take any of those questions. Take the last: the future. Shut up the Bible, and shut up with it all the light, I repeat, which is borrowed from it, and what do we know about the future? Our fellow

travellers are torn from our side, but it is an unseen hand that seizes them, and it is an unknown land to which they are conveyed. Generation after generation have stood on the dusky borders of the grave, and as they have looked into its dark depth they have sobbed out, "Man dieth and wasteth away, yea, man giveth up the ghost," and "where is he?" The mother as she has folded the little arms of him of whom she had said, "This same shall comfort me;" and the widow, when she has taken her last look at the manly face, have joined in the same sad cry, "Where is he?" There is something gone; it is that something I loved; this is but the rifled casket, the jewel is gone, and "Oh, where is he?" Men appealed to philosophy, and philosophy, by one of her ablest sons has said, "Whether it be better to live or die we cannot tell." Men appealed to science, and it confessed it was baffled. Men appealed to reason, and reason by the mouth of Mr. Holyoake in that sad, sad book, the *Logic of Death*, has said, "There is nothing before me but a black-impenetrable curtain, and I am as one that shouteth into a chasm: I hear nothing but the echo of my own voice." And is that all we are to have instead of the Bible?—a black impenetrable curtain, and a chasm in which we hear nothing but the sound of our own voices! Miserable comforters are they all! I turn to the Book, and all is clear. Life and immortality are brought to light. Men die as they died before, but we sorrow not as they sorrowed before. With this Book in my hand I can go to the valley and flood it with light: I can watch my comrade, as he grapples with his last enemy, and comes off more than conqueror: I can see him as, lightened of his earthly load, he wings his way upward amidst the hosannahs of the sky. And as John Bunyan says: "When I hear the harpers harping and bells ringing, I wish that I were with them."

Yes, thank God for the Bible! God is not only our

King, but our Father; He has a loving heart as well as an omnipotent arm; and because He loved us He lifted that "black impenetrable curtain." It was down before, but it is not down now, and God grant that Mr. Holyoake may soon see it lifted, and catch a glimpse of the glory! God raised that curtain. Philosophy could not do it; Science could not do it; Reason could not do it; but God could, and having raised it, He let St. John look. What a look that was! It was a representative look, a look for all men, in all ages. You remember the angels said, "Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book;" that was, "I do not let you look for yourself alone, go and tell it everywhere. Let all men know that there is a glorious home prepared for them beyond the grave." "And I looked," said John. Would that we could hear his words as for the first time! We have become so used to hear about heaven that the very word has lost a great deal of its beauty and music. It is like the coin from which the impression has been worn off. "I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on Mount Zion." Here we have John the Jew using the Jewish idea. To the Jew, Mount Zion was the joy of the whole earth; and when John looked he could think of no words so expressive as "Mount Zion," to describe the glorious place he saw. He seems to say, "I have heard Jesus speak of—'My Father's house;' and now I saw its glory, and Christ was the King, for, 'lo, the Lamb.'" You and I were listening for something about our lost loved ones; but Jesus is first in time, and first in eternity. You cannot see the stars, when the sun is shining, nor the creature, when the King is there. John says, "I knew Him well, I have laid upon His bosom, and loved Him with a love that passeth that of a woman. I saw men brand Him as an impostor, and cast Him out as not fit to live, and I saw Him as the heavens received Him out of our sight. Long years have passed since then; but I have kept the sweet music chiming in my soul; and I

have often wondered where and when I should see Him again." Then the curtain was raised, and He was there! "High o'er the angelic bands He rears His once dishonoured head." He is the King of Glory. "Lo, the Lamb."

"And with Him the redeemed." The sainted dead were there. John had heard Him say, "I go to prepare a place for you; and if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto Myself, that where I am there you may be also." And now the years have passed, and John's companions one by one have died, and he is left a tottering old man, wondering what had become of those lost ones; but when the curtain was raised they were there. They were not in purgatory, having the sins burnt off that the blood of Christ could not erase. They had

"Washed their robes by faith below,
In the blood of yonder Lamb,
The blood that washes white as snow,"

and therefore they were there. Some had come from the stake, and some from the deep sea, but they were all safe in heaven. "And with Him the redeemed, having their Father's name written on their foreheads." Their denominational names were all gone. On earth they had worn the regimentals of their various regiments, but the war was over, and they had left the regimentals behind them—they were children at home, with their Father's name upon their foreheads. There they stand round the Lamb, all the excrescences and frailties gone, all like their Father, and all getting more like Him to all eternity. "Their Father's name upon their foreheads."

What were they doing? John says they were singing. You know when you parted there was the sob, the sigh, and tear, but when you meet again there will be the smile, and the song. "And I heard them," says John. Yes, heaven is not a glorious solitude: it is full of happy people. John

heard the song, and tries to describe it. He says, "It was like the sound of many waters;" nothing could be more expressive. You have stood upon the sea-shore in a storm and have heard the waves of the sea as they have lifted up their voice; how all the voices of humanity were drowned in its thundering boom. John was on an island, and had often heard it, and catching up the idea he said the singing "was as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder,"—all expressive of the magnitude of the sound of the anthem of the redeemed. And can you not understand it? I think I can. Is it not true that every man who is going to heaven thinks he will have more reason to praise God than anybody else? If I heard one of you give your experience, and saying you owed more to God than anybody, I should say, "He does not know my history." While if I were to speak of my experience you would say, "Ah! he doesn't know me." We are all miracles of grace, and as we pass through the gates into the city, "wonder and joy shall tune our hearts, and love command our tongues." No wonder that the song is like the sound of many waters. "And I heard the voice of harpers harping." Does not that teach that humanity will not be altogether merged in the angelic in heaven? that man will be distinct from all other beings to all eternity? The angels will all be there, but if I were to meet with Gabriel I could not sing with him, nor he with me; there would not be much in common with us. He has never wept; never suffered; never sinned; the iron never entered his soul; he never looked down into the grave of the beloved, or at the cold, pale face; never writhed in the furnace, nor cried, "What must I do to be saved?" But if I met you there, we could sing together. We have wept the same tears, uttered the same cry for help, and could sing the same psalm of triumph. The angels are there to play the accompaniment, but the saints will sing the song: the

angels for ever servants, but men for ever sons. "And they sang as it were a new song." Of course they did. The old songs would not do; but does not every word teach us that the saints sing on their way to heaven, and that when they get through the gate they change their song? I wish some people would read their Bibles again—some good people. They seem to read in it that they should go to heaven with sighing; my Bible says it is with songs, and, depend upon it, you are not glorifying God by the sighing but by the song. "The men of grace have found glory begun below." We have a foretaste of heaven before we get there; but when we pass through the gate our joy will be full, and our pleasures for evermore.

What do we know about the song? Not very much, but thank God we know something. I am no mystery-monger, I have neither time nor talent for it. I leave that till I get to heaven. Here my hands are full of work; I cannot go into by-paths lest in the meantime a soul may be lost. I leave the mysterious part of my text, and take that about which there is no mystery, and, taking it, pray that it may comfort and strengthen our souls. What do we know about the song?

First, We know that the song which the redeemed sing is marked by the absence of much that they sang on earth. That is certain. We know what they sang here; we have their song-book, and as we turn over the leaves, every page is full of blessed memories. A glorious thing is our song-book,—the Church never had a better one,—but glorious as it is, it will not do for heaven. I open it and there I see—"Hymns for mourners convinced of sin," but there are no such people in heaven; "Hymns for believers fighting," but there is no sound of war there; "Hymns for believers suffering," but there are no sufferers there. I turn over the pages of this hymn-book and say, "Blessed book, thou shalt be my companion in the house of my

pilgrimage; but I shall leave thee at the pearly gate and sing a new song there."

Here we sing in character; for instance, here we are strangers, and as strangers we sing; here we are travellers, and as travellers we sing; here we are warriors, and as warriors we sing; here we are sufferers, and as sufferers we sing. Look at it a moment.

Here we are *Strangers*, and as strangers we sing. Remember I am now talking to God's children, and not to sinners. We are strangers; this is not our home. We have a home beyond. Sometimes we are foolish enough to try and make this earth our home. We adorn, decorate, beautify it; we build our nest and make it perfect, and in the foolishness of our heart we say "it is good for us to be here;" but as soon as we have finished it, God breaks up the nest, and then our eyes turn heavenward. We ourselves do not want our children to love some other place better than home. I have children away from home. If they were to write to me to-morrow, and say "Dear father, I don't want to come home. I am a great deal happier where I am," I don't think I should ever preach again; I believe my heart would break. So it is with our Father in heaven. He loves us too much to let us make our home here, and so when the nest is broken and our hopes cut off, we look homeward, and sing—

"Thou Shepherd of Israel and mine,
The joy and desire of my heart,
For closer communion I pine,
I long to reside where Thou art."

This is a glorious verse, but it is not a verse out of the New Song; for there we shall be with Him to part no more.

Here we are *Travellers*, and as travellers we sing. The journey to heaven is rough, and thorny. It is a great mistake to think we can get there easily. You cannot get

to heaven in those silver slippers we hear men speak about; but God has promised us, "Thy shoes shall be of iron and of brass." God knew the road was rough, and He made provision accordingly. Sometimes it is very steep—I am talking now to pilgrims—it is such hard work to rise, and there are a thousand influences which try to drag us back. But you struggle on and cry, "Lord help me." When you reach the summit of that height there is still another "alp upon alp," and the devil says, "Give it up, you will never reach your home;" but we take up the Book and sing—

"Could I but climb where Moses stood
And view the landscape o'er,
Not Jordan's stream nor death's cold flood
Should fright me from the shore."

That is a glorious verse, out of a glorious hymn, but I shall not sing it in heaven.

Here we are *Warriors*, and as warriors we sing: and here I want to speak a word or two very slowly that you may not forget it.—You can be a Methodist without fighting, but you cannot be a Christian. Oh, yes, you can be a Methodist; get your ticket, and meet or not meet in class; take your seat and go on, but never fight with your own bad temper, or covetousness, or evil propensities, and be just as bad, or a bit worse, at the end, than when you started. It is not so with Christians, they must fight or fall; yet there are some foolish people who directly they find themselves in the battlefield fancy they are not soldiers—and only in times of peace dare to claim the name. The devil has let them alone for years, and they are satisfied, but as soon as hell throws its gates open they say, "I am afraid," and become deserters. I was a short time ago standing by the side of some penitents in Liverpool, when one great strapping fellow came up seeking salvation. He had a hard struggle, for he was a great sinner. By and by the clouds

broke, and the light of God shone upon his soul, and he stood up holding my hand, and we sang—

"For the Lion of Judah shall break every chain,
And give us the victory again and again ;"

but all of a sudden all the sunshine went out of the man's face. I wondered what was the matter ; but he turned to me and said, " Oh, Mr. Garrett, but what shall I do *to-morrow* ? " It was easy to be a Christian in the chapel, with a minister laying his hand, and sympathizing friends around ; but, ah ! coming *to-morrow* at the dockside among his companions—that terrified him. Many a one in this chapel if they were going to die to-night would be Christians, but they tremble at the thought of the conflict. It is a hard thing to be a Christian. A soldier said to me the other day, " It requires more courage to be a soldier of Christ, than to be a soldier of the Queen. " " How is that ? " I asked. He replied, " I have been in the battlefield, and I have heard the sharp click, click of the sword, and the whistle of the balls as they rushed through the air ; I have seen my companions fall right and left, and I never trembled ; but when I found peace, and went home to the barracks that night, I trembled like a child. I knew that I must kneel down in the room by the bed, and pray. There were eight other men there, and when I entered you could have struck me down with a feather. However I went down on my knees, and they gathered round. ' Here's a lark,' they said, ' we're going to have a prayer meeting. ' They threw shoes at me, and I thought every moment that I must get up and knock one of them down ; but I went on night after night, and every one in that room kneels down now. " Yes, indeed, we have to fight. You have a sharp temper, God has to make you good tempered ; you are covetous, you must be generous. I do not understand a man gripping the world as hard as if his salvation depended on it, and then going home to glory.

We have to fight, and, thank God, we have our war song—

"Surrounded by a host of foes,
Stormed by a host of foes within;
Not swift to flee, nor strong to oppose,
Single against hell, earth, and sin—
Single, yet undismayed, I am,
I dare believe in Jesus' name."

Talk about "into the mouth of hell rode the six hundred;" what is that to one poor man fighting singly against earth, and hell, and sin, and yet singing—

"Single, yet undismayed, I am,
I dare believe in Jesus' name."

That is grand, but it is not out of the New Song. There is no sound of war there. There is an old veteran going to heaven. See, he takes off the helmet, and lays the armour aside while he cries, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown which the Lord the righteous Judge will give unto me."

We are *Sufferers*, and as sufferers we sing. I can almost shout for joy when I open this hymn-book at "Hymns for believers suffering." You cannot find songs for sinners suffering: with them when sorrow comes in at the door the songs go out at the window. The Christian is God's nightingale: he sings loudest when all the other birds are silent, and the sweetest songs from Christian lips are songs in the night. I went the other day to see a very poor old man lying in bed, and I said, "How are you getting on?" "Oh, sir," he replied, "God is with me: what I should do but for my Bible and hymn-book I don't know. At times the anguish seems to be driving me mad, and I feel as if I should go out of my senses; but when I am at the worst I sing—

'My God, I am Thine,
What a comfort divine,
What a blessing to know that the Saviour is mine!'

and the spasm of pain seems to relax, and I have peace again." I could take you to a poor fellow in one of our English country villages who stood alone against the squire in trying to sustain Methodism in the village. He was turned out of his farm, and all his property sold at a very bad time. The morning before the sale he said, "I could not sleep; I kept praying. It was hard work to see our household treasures scattered, and to think I was going to take my wife and children out without a home to go to. At breakfast time I said to my wife, 'Lass, we have never had a morning without prayer and singing. Perhaps this is the last time we shall have a home of our own; shall we give it up this morning?' 'No, we will not,' said she," and with desolation before them, they sang—

"Though waves and storms go o'er my head,
Though health, and strength, and friends be gone,
Though joys be withered all, and dead,
Though every comfort be withdrawn,
On this my steadfast soul relies—
Father, Thy mercy never dies."

Another glorious verse, but it is not from the New Song, and so I say to this volume—"Blessed book, thou shalt be my companion all the way to heaven, but at the pearly gate I shall leave thee behind, and sing a new song for evermore."

Second, We know that the New Song will contain much that we cannot sing here. There is much in Revelation we cannot sing here. When I say "we," I use it in the broad Christian sense. I am talking about the army, not the regiment. If there are things in God's Word about which we cannot unite to sing, let us at least not quarrel about them. Rather let us imitate the Jews, who, when they meet with any difficult passage in the Old Testament, say, "We must leave that till Esaias cometh." So let us say, We will leave it till Jesus comes, till our heads are clearer and our hearts are better, and who knows but that things, which

now seem contradictory, will then be seen to be in beautiful harmony with one another?

There is much in Providence we cannot sing about here. God is taking His children to heaven in His own way, and you and I do not get far on in our journey before we get perplexed and disheartened. Have you never been led in dark paths, when the cry of Why? came from your lips like a spark from hell? Why was my one flower withered, and another's garden full left untouched? Why that little face buried out of my sight just as its music and beauty were being displayed? Why the bright face gone from me just when I wanted its smile? Why the strong arm smitten down when I most needed its support? Why the eloquent minister silenced when the Church needed him most? Why? God only knows how bitterly that "why" came from me when I was stricken down myself. It haunted me like a shadow. Have you hung up your harp, and said, I shall never be able to sing again?—there is One looking down in pity who says, "What I do thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter." There is a New Song there. You will never sing it here, but you will beyond. You may have hung up your harp, but you have not broken it. It is still there, and by and by when we pass into the city, and see what St. John saw, we shall take down the harp, and as we break forth into song,

"Above the rest this note shall swell,
My Jesus hath done all things well."

I wanted to show you that the song will be sung in a new place, and in the midst of new company; with a new nature, and a new interest; but my time is gone, and I must leave it till we meet above. I ask you with all the earnestness of my soul, are you going to heaven? Not are you a Methodist; but are you a Christian bound for the kingdom? I do not want to know whether you have a pleasant journey. I know you have not; but one moment

in heaven will make up for all. Are you bound for the kingdom? Why should we not all go? You heard the text. None can sing that song but the redeemed, the delivered ones. God delivers His saints. The history of the saints may be written in one word—"Deliverance." Are you going to heaven, and are you learning this song? You do not know? Can you sing—"Unto Him that loved us." You can? Ah! but can you sing the next—"and washed us from our sins in His own blood"? If so, you are a Christian; if not, you have no part nor lot in the matter.

I said it would break my heart if my child said he did not want to come home; and so it would. Just think of God's sorrow. Listen to the cry that rings through the universe—"O Ephraim, what shall I do unto thee?" Come this morning, and do not grieve your God. Come while the blessed Sabbath-day is throwing its sunshine on thy brow, and a new light shall break upon thee, even the light of the glory of God.

God help thee to come! God help thee to come new!

XI.

PREPARE YE THE WAY OF THE LORD.¹

"The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low: and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places plain: and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it."—ISA. xl. 3-5.

IN the previous chapter Isaiah had been foretelling the captivity of the Jews in Babylon. Their hearts seemed to have been weighed down by the announcement, and God, "whose mercy endureth for ever," pitied them in their sorrow, and commanded Isaiah to make a revelation to them that should cheer and encourage them; and in order that Isaiah might be able to do this, "God gave his spirit strength to sweep adown the gulf of time." He saw Cyrus raised up, he saw him leading the people across the wilderness to their own land again; and then the prophet, as was his wont, taking material things, to illustrate spiritual ones, at once began to speak of that of which these things were but the type. He sees in the wilderness, that stretched between Babylon and Jerusalem, a type of the world; in the Jews, in bondage in Babylon, a type of the children of men; and in Cyrus a type of Christ; and, looking onward to our own more glorious days, he cries, "I hear a voice" (the voice of a herald—after the custom of those days when a monarch was about to visit any distant

¹ Preached at the Metropolitan Tabernacle on behalf of the National Temperance League.

part of his dominions) "crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God: for every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low: and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places plain: and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh" (not simply the Jews) "shall see it together: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it." What was prophecy to Isaiah is fact to us. We live in those days of which Isaiah spoke; and those words which Isaiah heard in the distance, are spoken by the Almighty in our own hearing, and with reference to our own day. Christ has appeared, has set up His kingdom amongst us, and has come to claim the nations for His own. But there are difficulties in the way. There are barriers that have been thrown up, and God commands us, by the mouth of Isaiah, to gird up the loins of our minds, and to devote ourselves to the high and holy work of removing them; and then He promises that He will reward us for our work, by making bare His arm, and filling the world with His glory.

First, the text teaches us that there are certain things which hinder the spread of the Redeemer's kingdom, spoken of here as valleys, hills, mountains, rough places, and crooked ways. The obstacles to the spread of the Redeemer's kingdom are so numerous, that I must not even attempt to name them, but refer, as an illustration of what I mean, to heathenism, and idolatry, abroad, and to ignorance, and vice, at home. The heathenism we are trying to remove, and that yawning valley of ignorance we are, by God's grace, as a nation, trying to fill up; but our national vices, which are like mountains, we are also commanded by God to level, and to remove. I want especially to point out to you this afternoon one of these vices, which is the parent of all others—I mean Intemperance, which hinders the progress of God's kingdom on every hand.

In the first place, intemperance hinders the progress of God's kingdom at home. The Church claims England for her own, but does Christ? One look around will give an answer, enough to sadden the heart, not only of every Christian, but of every patriot. If we look amongst the higher classes, we see large numbers who, having the form of godliness, deny the power; and if we look amongst the lower classes, we see still larger numbers of them who are living without God, and without hope in the world. Our country is occupied by three armies. There is first, an army of paupers; there is another almost equally large army of criminals; and then there is a third army of police, to stand between the vicious and the virtuous, and protect the latter, from the assaults of the former. Now, I ask, how is this? Are there no churches erected, no chapels built, no schools open, no ministers appointed? Every one knows that the answer must be, that there are all these, and many more agencies in operation. How is it, then, that in spite of our houses of prayer, in spite of our ministers, in spite of our teachers, and in spite of all these elevating, and ameliorating influences, such a state of things exists? I answer, because there is this huge evil established amongst us, which casts its dread shadow over everything that is lovely and of good report. Where, for example, are the working men of England to be found to-day? Not in the house of prayer. Of working men (leaving out those who, by the agency of total abstinence, have had their eyes opened, and been brought under the influence of the gospel), very few of the *bona fide* working men will be found there. In many churches, and chapels, they so rarely present themselves, that the appearance of a genuine navvy would astonish the congregation almost as much as the appearance of a North American Indian. How is this? Every Christian ought to ask the question, and when he has found the answer, he ought further to inquire whether

it is possible to remove the cause. Where, then, I ask, are our working men to be found? I have an answer in the following fact:—Three or four Sundays ago, some of our young men at Manchester watched ten public-houses during the eight and a half hours they were allowed by law to be open. Each young man took a note of the persons who went in during that time; and what was the result? Just this: that in round numbers into these ten houses there went 6000 men, 3000 women, and 1000 children. That was, bear in mind, in only ten houses, and remember that we have 3500 of them in this city. Now, I leave you to say whether that is not an explanation of the reason that so few of the working men are found clothed, and in their right mind, sitting at the feet of Jesus? In the case of many of them they have no suitable clothes; but why is this? Because wages are low? They never were so good. Because trade is bad? As a whole, it is prosperous. How, then, is it? I answer, because the money which ought to be spent in purchasing clothes for themselves, their wives, and their children, is carried to the public-house, and is thus worse than wasted. I was in some large works a few days ago, and the owner of them told me that he had men in that establishment who were earning £5 per week, and who had not a decent coat to put on their backs; and he questioned whether their wives had a decent dress to wear on the Sabbath-day. He told me of one man, who had been in the receipt of £3 per week, who was killed by an accident which happened in the establishment, and when he was carried home there was not a sheet in the house on which to lay him out. I say this, and a thousand other facts, that I might bring forward, bear out the testimony of city missionaries, and others, who are specially qualified to form an opinion, that drink is the great preventive to working men being brought under the influence of the gospel. Then there is another

point. There are some who go many times, perhaps regularly, to the house of God, and yet are not saved. Why? I believe that the grand neutraliser of the gospel is the habit of drinking intoxicating liquors. You ask me for my reason. I could give many, but will be content with two. A sailor at Hull once said to me, "When I came to God's house first, and began to see that things were wrong with me, I determined I would try to be a Christian. I prayed earnestly that God would make me His child, and help me to live as a Christian should live; but I did not give up the drink, and I found that somehow or other drink and religion didn't agree. Then I thought I would try another tack. I gave up the drink, and directly after I found peace with God, and now find that teetotalism and Christianity work well together." The experience of thousands has been the same. There are, indeed, many who, if they abandoned the glass, would soon find their way to Calvary, and be saved. I spoke to a gentleman a little while since, who came to me in great distress about his soul. I said, "You have been brought up under Methodist influences, haven't you?" "Yes," he said, "in early life my mother took me to God's house. I have generally been there on the Sabbath, and"—looking at me with a look that told me the reality of his words—"hundreds of times I have trembled, and wept, as I have listened to your sermons, and have made up my mind that I would be a child of God, but the first glass of wine I took when I got home, swept those resolutions away." I believe that the same truth would hold good of thousands and tens of thousands who go to the house of prayer on the Sabbath; the glass or two of wine after their return home washes away the impression, and, in some cases, leaves them farther from God, than they were before they heard the sermon that impressed them. These then are illustrations of what I mean by strong

drink being a hindrance to the spread of the gospel at home.

It is also a hindrance to the spread of the gospel abroad. As I look on the world, I remember, in the first place, that our Divine Master, in His great sacrifice, has made a full provision for all mankind. I remember in the second place, that having made a provision for the salvation of the human family, He, with His last words, laid upon His Church the responsibility of sending the glad tidings to all lands, and to all people. They were not to leave an island unvisited, nor a man unwarned. They were to say of nobody, "He is too low down to be raised up," or, "He is too filthy to be cleansed," or, "He is too rebellious to be subdued." The command was clear and distinct: "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." Have we obeyed it? If you look on the world, you will see a few mission stations shining like fireflies at midnight, and a few islands bright with the smile of God, but the rest are lying in wickedness. I ask, how is this? Is it that there is some particular barrier which prevents us from reaching these countries? We used to hear at our missionary meetings the prayer that God would open the door to the heathen. We don't hear that prayer now, for the doors are wide open. The fact being that God has opened the doors more quickly than we have been prepared to enter them. How is it, then, that though 1800 years have passed since the Redeemer made His great provision, and gave us the command to carry the glad tidings to all; and that though in all lands the people are crying, "Men and brethren, what must we do to be saved?" still midnight darkness rests upon most of the human family? Is it that we do not distinctly perceive our duty? Certainly not. I go to those who are best acquainted with these things, and I ask them for an explanation. They tell me there are three reasons. First, there is a want of means;

secondly, there is a want of men; and thirdly, there is a want of success on the part of those who are already in the field. Now, I want you to look with me at these three reasons; while I try to show you that strong drink has to do with all of them.

In the first place, they tell us that we cannot, as Christians, take possession of the world because we have not the means. The Church recognises her duty, and is anxious about it. She not only sings—

“Were the whole realm of nature mine,
That were a present far too small;
Love so amazing, so divine,
Demands my soul, my life, my all,”

but she has set to work and organized vast machinery by which to fill her treasury. Our most talented men are selected for deputations to go through the land. Thousands of missionary meetings are held, missionaries are brought home in order that they may arouse us by a declaration of the sights they have seen in heathen lands. We have books published, prize essays written, sermons preached, and speeches made. Our wives and sisters, our very children are set to work, and yet what is the fact of the case? That the contributions of the people of this country to the great work of converting the world amount to just upon eightpence per head! Does the Great Master look upon this as He looked upon the widow who cast her two mites into the treasury, and say of this land, “She has done what she could”? Is it a truth that England, the richest land upon earth, made rich too by her Christianity, has done what she could for Him who redeemed her when she gives eightpence per head for the conversion of the world? Is it so? Alas! no; for while we have done this, we have spent four pounds per head for strong drink. Christian and thoughtful men, look at this! Ought it so to be? Ask

yourselves whether it is right we should give four pounds per annum for that which is, at the best, a needless luxury, and eightpence for the conversion of a perishing world? I know what the answer in your hearts will be. I say to the Church of Christ that there need not be all this "pumping" if she were faithful. If she were to give as much for the conversion of the world, as she does for drink, her treasury would be full to overflowing, and we should have to cry, "Stay your hands; the pecuniary wants of the world are met." Some are beginning to see this. I was looking a short time since at a beautiful chapel, holding perhaps 1800 or 2000 people. A gentleman connected with it said, "There's not a penny of debt upon it." "How did you manage that?" I asked. "Oh," said he, "we are all abstainers, and what we were accustomed to pay for drink we gave to God, and the result is, that we have got this house without a penny of debt upon it." Oh, if the Church wants to build chapels, or establish schools, or aid missionary societies, she has but to go and do likewise, and she will soon find there is nothing in reason she cannot accomplish! As soon as the Church, under the constraining love of Christ shall stand up and say, "We will drink no more intoxicating liquor until the spiritual wants of the world are met," the millennial day will burst upon us.

Then there is the second reason. They say the world is not converted, because we have not the men—especially suitable men—men who will turn the world upside down.—men who will go like a flame of fire into the midst of the heathen. How is this? There are men to be found for everything else. When men are wanted by our Government for India, or for Africa, or for the islands of the sea, there are plenty of young men ready to say, "Here are we, send us." How is it, then, that when our Divine Master wants ambassadors, so few of the right stamp are prepared

to respond? I believe one reason is, that the drinking customs have done much to enervate the Church. The stream will never rise higher than its fount. A cross-shirking, pleasure-seeking Church will never produce a self-sacrificing, cross-bearing body of young men. Let the Church rise, and the young men will rise with her; let the Church be self-sacrificing, and we shall have a host of young men coming out of her, who will go east, and west, north, and south, and fill the earth with joy and gladness. The *Methodist Magazine* some years ago said, that strong drink was destroying more souls than all the ministers of Christ were saving. In looking at this terrible fact, remember, strong drink aims high. It aims at the men of active brain, and warm heart. Those who fall victims to it are your best men. It is your best mechanics, it is your best soldiers, it is your best sailors, it is your best orators, it is your best legislators,—and with reverence, and trembling, I would say, it is your best ministers, who are in the greatest danger from this evil. There are some men who can't fall; some who are of the earth, earthy, and alcohol seems to have little influence over them; but the men of active brain, and warm heart, at once seem to be affected by it, and in spite of their prayers and resolutions, many of them are swept away by the destroyer. If we think of this properly, we shall see why it is that there are not more men to go into the rough places of the Christian field, and fight the battle for our great Redeemer.

Then there is the third reason—want of success—at which I may but glance. On the part of those who have gone into the heathen world, we hear, on every hand, the cry, "Who hath believed our report, and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?" We are mourning with our missionaries that we see so few of the wonderful manifestations of God's saving power. What is it that hinders the

course of the gospel in the heathen world? Are we mistaken as to its nature? This is impossible. It is the power of God to salvation to every one that believeth. It is God's remedy for the world's disease. Why then is it hindered in its blessed work? The answer that comes from those engaged in the work, and who are best qualified to judge, is that there are European barriers that are much stronger than heathenism and idolatry. The missionary tells us, over and over again, that he is far more afraid of English drinking, than he is of native idolatry; that he has trembled again and again at the sight of an English face, when he would not have trembled at the face of some heathen chief. Duncan Mathieson, writing from Constantinople, says, "At every spot the gospel meets this dreadful foe. It baffles our every effort. It makes the very name of Christian abhorred." Archdeacon Jeffreys says, "Where the gospel has saved tens in India, strong drink has destroyed hundreds." Chunder Sen, to whom many of you listened a short time since, says, that "the air of India rings with the cries of those who have been destroyed by strong drink." And I might quote similar testimony from almost every land. Here, then, are the witnesses of the truth of my position; and they tell us that our drinking habits have been such an injury to us in the eyes of the heathen, that they have come to regard Christianity, and drunkenness, as synonymous terms; and that when one of their number is seen under the influence of drink, they say, "He has become a Christian!" Thus drink is found to be one of the greatest hindrances to their glorious work.

I have thus tried to show you that strong drink is the huge mountain that hinders the progress of the kingdom of Christ. It hinders it at home; it hinders it abroad; it hinders it everywhere. And now I come to my second position, *that it is the duty of the Christian Church to sweep this enemy away.* Do I hear some of my Christian friends

saying, "Oh that it were possible!"? My friends, the Church will never be able to cast mountains into the depths of the sea, till she is strong in faith. No! The Great Master said, "If ye have *faith*, ye shall say to this mountain, be thou removed, and cast into the depths of the sea," and faith in regard to this evil must be as strong as that, or we shall never succeed. You ask me, then, "Can this mountain be removed?" I point you to my text: The voice of the Lord saith "every valley *shall* be exalted, and every mountain and hill *shall* be made low, and the crooked *shall* be made straight, and the rough places plain." You may not take part in this glorious work through unbelief, but if *you* don't touch this evil, somebody else will, and if you don't enter upon your work in this the time of your visitation, then God will raise up another people that shall be more worthy of Him. You may delay His work, but you cannot prevent it. "Every valley *shall* be exalted, and every mountain and hill *shall* be made low, and the crooked places *shall* be made straight, and the rough places plain." Here, then, is our foothold. God has decreed that these mountains shall perish. Now, I turn to the Christian Church, to you who are here, and through you to those outside; and I call upon the Church to respond to the voice of her Great Master, and give herself to the work that is put before her. First, let me say most emphatically, that the Church *can* remove this mountain of which I am now especially speaking. Look at her merely on her human side, and you will perceive that she is the mightiest organization in existence. Let the Church decree that any evil in this land shall perish, and who can preserve it? Look at her power as a teacher. Are not the children of our country in her hands? Is there a village, or hamlet, where her teaching is not heard? Let her, then, denounce this cause of evil, and her voice will be listened to, and obeyed. Then look at the political power

which she possesses. Is there an election in which the Christian Church cannot turn the balance? We know there is not. There is not a borough in the kingdom in which she cannot decide who shall be the representative. Let her be loyal to her Great Master, and she will speak to Parliament in such terms that, before another session is gone, this traffic will be doomed.

That is the human side of the Church; but, then, there is the Divine side. Looked at from an earthly point of view, she is mighty; but from a Divine point of view, she is much more mighty, for "God is in the midst of her, and He shall help her." She has not only the ordinary power which men have, but she has Omnipotence at her command. She can not only influence Parliament and kings, but she can "move the Arm that moves the world." Let her stand up in her strength, and she can not only wrestle with flesh and blood, but with principalities and powers, and when she puts forth her strength her enemies must lick the dust. Let her then arise, and decree the end of this evil, and in our own days that end shall come.

The Church *must*, if she would hold her own. There is no neutrality in this war. If we are not assailing strong drink, it is assailing us. Look into the Church, and everywhere you will find "Rachel weeping for her children because they are not:" numbers who were in the forefront of the fight falling into the rear; Officers, who led on the sacramental hosts, retiring from the field; men, who once occupied a sacred place, falling away through this terrible evil. I have seen sights that, if I were to depict them to you, would harrow up your souls. They tell me sometimes I speak strong words about this matter, but then my heart is sore within me. I have seen a minister, at whose feet I have sat in by-gone days, dragged down by strong drink, till, with a blackened face, he has stood up in the drinkshop, and there muttered out his sermons amidst

the laughter and mockery, of those by whom he was surrounded. Oh, yes, if the Church is not attacking the drink, the drink is attacking the Church. *The Church must attack the drink if she would keep her own.* The tide of evil is surging round us. It is sweeping away our sons and daughters. *What can we do? do we not hear in our newspapers and see in our lives that not only our sons and daughters are swept away, but that our mothers, wives and sisters are not safe?* *The Church must, if she would please her Master.* Selfish considerations are not to be entertained. "Whatsoever ye do," that is, the command, "Whether ye eat or drink, do all to the glory of God." Our great business is to do His will. It seems to me that many people join the Church who have very erroneous notions as to what is meant by church-membership. There are many who seem to think that the Church is a beautiful banqueting-house, into which they may enter, and where they may "sit and sing themselves away to everlasting bliss." It is a great mistake. The Church is an army—the army of the living God, and the moment a man hears the voice of Jesus saying, "Thy sins, which are many, are all forgiven thee," he hears the same voice saying, "Now destroy the works of the devil,—try to make earth like heaven, and every man like Me. Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might." The soldier, remember, is bound to war against every enemy of his king; and so it is with the soldiers of Christ. I may not pick and choose. Some of our friends say, "Oh, we can't assault that enemy." We are very busy with ignorance, or heathenism. All right. Fight away with these, but remember that when a man enlists—and some of the friends here are men who wear the coloured clothes of the army could tell you this even better than I can—he doesn't bargain. He will only fight against certain foes. There is no understanding that he will fight the French, and not the Germans,

or fight the Austrians, and not the Russians. Imagine that war was declared with any of these nations, and a certain regiment were to say, "We didn't enlist to fight against that enemy!" The thing is absurd. The soldier enlists to fight against *every* enemy of his monarch, and the soldier of the cross enlists to fight against *every* enemy of his King. He is bound to fight against everything that injures man, or offends God. He must. The command has gone forth, and he will not be found faithful if he attempts to evade it.

Some present may ask me, How are we to proceed? I answer, first, if you want to battle with intemperance, you must do it by total abstinence from the drink. Nothing will do instead. You may preach from the pulpit, you may form your organizations, but if you don't abstain yourself, you will never succeed. We may legislate till doomsday, but unless we pass a law upon our lips, depend upon it the enemy will hold us in derision. What does the Book tell us? "Ye are the lights of the world." You can't help yourselves. You are Christ's representatives to those who know you. You, my brother, if you go into a house, are Christ's representative there. There are little children at the table with you, and they say, "Is it right to drink?" and they look to you for the answer. Actions speak louder than words. You sometimes say, you would not lift up your finger against teetotalism, but it has been said every time you take a glass of wine you lift up a finger. Your example will be in favour of drinking. Actions, I say again, speak louder than words. It is no good for me to denounce drink by my lips, if I do not denounce it by my practice. My life will always be more influential than my words. And there are not only the children to be preserved, but the fallen to be raised; and here, too, your example will be mighty for good, or evil. I avoid strong drink for the sake of those who are suffering. Will not you do the same? The very last conversation I had with that noble

man—George Wilson (formerly the Chairman of the Anti-Corn Law League)—was on this subject. He said, "Mr. Garrett, I often wish that the clergy of the Church knew how much good they could do by abstaining from strong drink." I said, "Yes, I wish they did." "I have a friend," he continued, "belonging to one of the first families in the country. He is a young married man, and has been intemperate. His wife, mother, and friends have wept, and prayed, about him, and at last, he has signed the pledge for twelve months. Only this morning his mother, who drove to see me in her carriage, said, 'Oh, Mr. Wilson, I am so unhappy about my son! I heard him say last night he should be glad when the twelve months were over; and it has been such a blessed twelvemonth to us all. I asked him why? and he replied, 'Because, go where I may, I am now branded as intemperate. I mix with company, and sit down at a table at which I am the only one that does not take wine. My glass of water seems to say to all around, here is a man who was a drunkard. If others took water—if only another did—I could stand it; but, my glass of water being the only one, tells the company that I am a slave to drink. I cannot stand alone, and I shall be glad when it is over.' " There are men like this in almost every society; men who are moral paralytics. They cannot fight the battle for themselves, and we ministers, and you Christians, are those to whom their eyes are turned for help. They say, "If he would only take water instead of wine; if he would only stand by my side and help me, I would thank him here, and bless him hereafter." And will you not do it? Will you pass by on the other side, and leave them to perish? Oh, surely not! Love to God, and man, forbids it. You will come to their aid, and in your example they will find a harbour of refuge. Abstinence first! What next? Entire prohibition of the traffic. Do what you will; form your Bands of Hope; establish your Temperance Societies;

preach your sermons; but as long as we have a business licensed to produce misery, vice, and crime, in our midst, the evil will continue. You remember that wonderful sketch, of the Interpreter's House, in the *Pilgrim's Progress*. Even the boys who are here will recollect it. Christian went into a room where there was a fire burning, and there were men pouring water upon it. But it was of no use, for the fire would burn, in spite of the water they poured. He wondered, as well he might, at this singular circumstance; but his guide led him round, and showed him somebody else behind pouring oil on the fire, which had more effect in feeding the flame, than the water had in extinguishing it. That is a true description of the traffic in strong drink. We have the fire amongst us; our souls and daughters, and our national interest, and honour, are being consumed by it. Some of us have been trying to extinguish it. We have used the pulpit, the desk, and the platform, and yet this fire has burned the fiercer, and now we have gone behind and found 150,000 persons licensed to perpetuate it, and shall we tolerate this? They tell us they are licensed by the Government. I say no Government has a right to license men to tempt my children to do wrong. Don't tell me about rights, or vested interests. I have vested interests; I have ten little children at home, and who will protect them from these 150,000 men, the direct tendency of whose trade is to blight and ruin them, here, and hereafter? In the name of the fathers and mothers of England, I demand the prohibition of the traffic. We must have it! Will you help? Oh, look at your little children! You may be strong, but they are weak. Look at the victims around that are powerless.

"Men of God, to you they cry,
Turns to you their tear-filled eye,
"Help us, Christians, or we die—
Die in a dark despair."

Shall we be anxious about the heathen, careless about the sufferers at home? I say, reach idolatry, and destroy it, but in God's name reach the intemperance of England and sweep it away.

Lastly, *the text puts before us the glorious result.* We have long been crying, "Let Thy kingdom come." We have waited for it, we have wrestled in our closets for it, but still it has been delayed. Why? A little boy, one cold winter's morning, at family prayer, heard his father, who was a rich man, praying earnestly that God would comfort the poor in the piercing cold weather. When prayer was over, the little fellow went nestling up to his father's side, and said, "Papa?" "What do you want, my boy?" "Oh, that," he said, "was such a nice prayer. I am so glad you prayed that God would comfort the poor people, who have nothing to eat, and no clothes to wear in this cold weather." "I am glad you liked it," said the father. "Yes," said the boy, "and, father, I thought, if I had some of your money, I would soon answer that prayer." Yes, and we can answer many of our prayers at once if we will. "Thy kingdom come" is our cry. Here is God's answer: "Set to work; lift up the valley, bring down the mountain, make the rough places plain, and the crooked places straight, and then I will come." God waits for man. It is a solemn thought. But it is true. Does He not do so in nature? Have you not to plough, and sow, before He gives you the increase? Was it not so when He was here on earth? There is the dead Lazarus. Does He not say first, "Roll ye away the stone," . . . and then, "Lazarus, come forth"? So it is ever. God never does man's work. That is a law. God, therefore, is waiting for us to do our duty—how anxiously He waits who can conceive?—As soon as the Church is prepared to do the Lord's bidding, the world shall be filled with His glory.

Before we part, let me speak a word or two to any in

this congregation who may be victims to this vice. Brother, you have wept many tears, made many efforts, have signed the pledge and broken it again, and you say, "It's of no use for me to try to escape." Like the ancient people, you are saying, "There is no hope, therefore after my idols will I go." My brother, there is hope. God is able to make you stand. Are there not many listening to me who were once tied and bound with the chains of this sin, but Omnipotence has touched their fetters, and they are now the Lord's free men? My brother, my sister, wherever, and whoever, you are, in Christ there is hope for you.

Christians, for your own sake, for your children's sake, for your country's sake, for the Church's sake—come and help us! I know what people have said, though I am tired of answering it; they say that we put teetotalism in the place of the gospel. You might as well say that we put the bread we give to a starving man, or the lessons we give to an ignorant child, in the place of the gospel. You should remember that a man must be in the right condition before the gospel will do him good. Our work is to level mountains. We are to be pioneers, and the royal chariot cannot get on if this is not done. If you Christian people will help us on with your smiles, and prayers, and active co-operation, through God we shall soon succeed. Christian friends, we are trying to obey the text—will you not do the same? If not, be sure you have a reason that will be sufficient at the judgment day. My teetotal friends, a word to you. Take care that while you level mountains, you be loyal to the King. Take care of that. Take care that you are not like the poor French prisoners in Germany, working for a king whom you in your hearts detest. Men may serve God, and yet never partake of His glory. The men who built the ark perished; and oh, it is sad to see a man fighting nobly, and yet not loyal to the king! God help you to enlist to-day. Do so for your own sake,

brother. If you want to grapple with the devil, see that you have God with you. If only for your usefulness' sake, I would urge you to come to Christ. Do so also for the sake of the cause. It pierces me through when I hear it said, "Such a man is a teetotalter, but he swears, he breaks the Sabbath." Oh, let us be free from any such reproach! Let us be perfectly loyal to Christ. To be safe, to be useful, to be happy, you must be His. Will you come to Him to-day? I know there are many prayers offered about this service this afternoon, and shall they not be answered? This is the house of God, this is the gate of heaven. My brother, you may have come here a slave of the devil, but you may go away the Lord's free man. You may have come a double-dyed sinner, but you may go away as white as snow. Shall I lead you to Jesus? Shall I now? "Oh," you say, "but look at my sins!" I say, "Look at the cross of Christ." You say, "Look at my pollution," I say, "Look at the cleansing blood."

"Were all the sins that men have done,
Since worlds were made or time begun,
In will, or word, or thought, or deed,
Laid on one guilty sinner's head,
The blood of Christ, that crimson sea,
Would take the guilt of all away."

We shall never all meet again till the archangel's trumpet shall summon us to appear before the judgment-seat of Christ, and I want you to be ready. My fellow-sinner, thou art now close to Christ. His eyes are upon thee. He longs to receive thee. Rest thy soul on Him, and all shall be well. Brethren, I leave you in God's hands. May He bless and prosper you for ever and ever! Amen.

XII.

SAVE THE CHILDREN.¹

"It is not the will of your Father which is in heaven, that one of these little ones should perish."—MATT. xviii. 14.

IT is the prerogative of God to turn curses into blessings, and to bring good out of evil, and this He is constantly doing. It is seen in the history of the human family, and especially in the volume of Revelation. We owe some of the most precious parts of the sacred book to the wickedness of man. Take, for example, the 15th chapter of the Gospel by Luke, a chapter that has been more honoured in leading sinners to Christ, than perhaps any chapter in the Bible. This we should never have had but for the envy and malice of the Scribes and Pharisees. They complained that our Divine Master received sinners; and He, instead of denying the statement, welcomed it, and illustrated and defended it by those blessed parables, and so made the wrath of man to praise Him. My text is another remarkable illustration. The apostles, like the rest of the Jews, held the opinion that the Messiah would establish an earthly kingdom, and reign in worldly glory. Their Master frequently rebuked this error, and showed them that He had come for a far higher purpose; yet they clung to the idea, and it frequently manifested itself. It did so at the time when the text was uttered. Some of them had witnessed the glory of His transfiguration, and all of them

¹ Preached in Great Queen Street Chapel, for the Band of Hope.

had seen His power as it was shown in the production of the tribute money. These marvellous scenes had awakened their old hope, and, falling behind their Master, they began to talk about His kingdom, and to argue as to which of them should hold the highest place in it. As each of them doubtless had what he considered a sufficient reason for believing that the post of honour would be occupied by himself, they disagreed; and, ambition, and envy, having prepared the way for hypocrisy, they went to the Master as if it were a mere matter of curiosity, and not one in which they had any personal interest, and said, "Master, who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" The Saviour thoroughly understood them, and, taking a little child, told them not what they wanted to know, but the terrible fact that, unless they became men of a different spirit, instead of being first in His kingdom, they should not enter therein. He then preached to them a sermon, which, if rightly heard, would have shown them the way of life, and, having finished the sermon, He rewarded the child for the use He had made of him by uttering the words of my text—words that throw a halo of glory around the head of every child of man, words that are indeed "glad tidings of great joy to all people." They tell us that He who made the children loves them all. Guided by their light, we lose our fears, and may look upon the little ones with holy joy. There is no exception; "It is not the will of your Father that one of these little ones should perish." The mother, as she gazes on her bright-eyed little group, may see these blessed words reaching like a rainbow over them all. The teacher may see it spanning the school; the minister, the church; the patriot, the country; the Christian, the world. It is a Divine revelation over which the whole family of man may rejoice, and be glad.

To this passage I want to call your attention. I gather around me the ten millions of Britain's children—in the

light of the text I plead with you on their behalf. Some of them bright and joyous, some sad and sorrowful, some clothed in purple and fine linen, and some in rags; but over them all—*over them all, equally*, are the words of the Saviour: "It is not the will of your Father that one of them should perish." My subject, then, is the children—Britain's children; and a subject more interesting; more attractive, or more important, it is impossible to have. Alas for us as a nation, they have hitherto been shamefully overlooked! We have cared for our ships, our guns, our very cattle, but the children have been all but forgotten. This has been our national sin, and is now our national disgrace. The Bible says, "A child left to himself bringeth his mother to shame," and it is so. No adornment or accomplishment will dignify a woman who neglects her children. And no victories, no wealth, no discoveries, no commerce, will make a nation glorious, whose children are neglected. Hence, if we are true patriots, we shall put every other question aside till we have done our duty in this matter. May the text be the star that shall guide us!

I. The text implies that the children are in terrible danger. One of the most expressive words in the Bible is employed respecting them—the word "perish!" Who can fathom the full meaning of this fearful word? I know what is meant by a mill perishing, or a vessel perishing, but no human being can comprehend what is meant by a child perishing. The word is used by the Saviour, as the opposite to everlasting life, and hence it means not only the ruin of the body, but the ruin of the soul. It refers not only to time, but to the vast ages of eternity. If a lost soul could speak to us, we should learn that the destruction of every palace on the land, and every vessel on the sea, would be nothing to the loss of a child.

And is it true that our children are in such danger? It is. Don't we sing—

"The streets of the city are full
Of poor little perishing souls?"

And is it not a most humiliating thought—that there is not a town, or village, in the land in which these lost ones are not to be found? Look into the streets, into the prisons, into the asylums, into eternity, and then say if they are not

"Perishing, perishing every day!"

If this is so, ought we not, with intense earnestness to seek out the cause, and, having discovered it, pledge ourselves before God, never to rest till we have done our utmost, to remove it?

Let us then inquire into the sources of the children's danger. This inquiry will cover a wide area, and at many of the points we can only glance.

They are in danger, first, *from the depravity of their nature*. No one loves children more tenderly than I do, but I cannot forget that they are "shapen in iniquity," that "foolishness is bound up in their hearts," and that their imaginations are evil—only evil—and that *continually*. This must be constantly borne in mind in our dealings with them, for a mistake here will be vital. If we are not acquainted with the nature of the material with which we have to do, we shall "labour in vain and spend our strength for nought."

We must therefore remember that we have to do with a fallen race. The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge. Humanity was bad when it came from Adam, but it is worse when it comes from us. Many of the children have a fearful heritage of transmitted tendencies,—tendencies which years of prayers, and tears, will not destroy. The sins of generations are concentrated in

them, and those sins will be reproduced, unless prevented by Divine interference. Angels can visit this world without acquiring a stain, and our great Master could say, "Satan cometh, but hath nothing in Me." Not so, however, with these little ones: in each breast there are combustibles which a single spark may ignite, and which, once ignited, may burn for ever.

Their danger arises, secondly, *from the determined hostility of the great enemy of man.*

How thoughtlessly we utter the words "the devil," and yet what a terrible meaning they have! They bring before us a being so vast that his dark shadow seems to reach almost to the gate of heaven. Think of his mighty intellect, his immense experience, his unwearying activity, and remember that it is *his* will that every one of these little ones should perish. Look at the mighty ones whom he has overcome. If he conquered Peter, David, Noah, Adam, how shall these little ones escape? Alas! instead of wondering that so many of them fall, we can only say, "It is of the Lord's mercy" that any of them escape. It must not then be forgotten, that, in trying to save the children "we wrestle not with flesh and blood merely, but with principalities and powers, and spiritual wickedness in high places."

In the third place, the children are in danger from the *circumstances by which they are surrounded.*

The children are not born in Paradise, but in a world of which Satan is the prince. A Roman poet compared the birth of a child, to the shipwreck of a sailor, on a hostile shore, and this comparison is true of the children of our own land. Look into many of the homes about us, and you will be struck with its truthfulness. One of our poets speaks of "heaven" being "around us in our infancy." It would, however, be far more correct to say of many of our children that hell is around them. The air they breathe is

poison, the sounds they hear are sin. The father's voice fills them with terror, and the mother's wild yell is the signal of despair. What chance is there of their being either healthy, intelligent, or virtuous—of their being prosperous here, or saved hereafter? You are compelled to say, "It had been good for them if they had never been born."

Let us name a few of the adverse circumstances which meet the children:—

There is, first, *the language*. How almost universal improper language has become! To take a little child down our streets, or into a third class railway carriage, is to expose its quick ear to sounds that are full of pollution. Blasphemy is the mother tongue of thousands of British children, and we may indeed say, "Because of swearing the land mourneth."

There is *the general course of life*. Of the majority of our fellow-countrymen we may say, "God is not in all their thoughts." Their children are taught to live a merely animal life—to live as though they had no soul, no God, no eternity.

There is *also the literature*. We boast of our "free press," but our liberty in this matter has degenerated into horrible licentiousness. Look at the shop-windows of our newsagents, and lower-class booksellers, and you will find them full of papers containing records of lust, and cruelty, and in which there is scarcely a line that is not an offence to God, or an injury to man. At each window you will see a crowd of children eagerly gazing on loathsome pictures, which their sensitive minds will at once receive, and which once received, can never be forgotten—pictures that in coming days will be reproduced in their lives with terrible aggravations. We have Boards of Health that look after the physical nuisances which exist, but we want still more some Moral Boards who will deal with these pestiferous

publications, which are ruining the bodies, and souls, of our young people. Society has a right to prevent men from corrupting the morals of its youth. In the meantime let me implore those engaged in the newspaper business to think on this matter. Some of them say they cannot live without selling these things. If so, they had far better die in a workhouse, than live by that which will be the ruin of the children around them.

Lastly, there are the drinking habits and customs of society ; on these I wish especially to dwell.

If other evils have slain their thousands, these have slain their tens of thousands. Strong drink is the chief material enemy of our children. It meets them everywhere. They will find it in many of the holiest and brightest of homes,—homes from which every other material evil is carefully excluded. It is put before the children by the purest and best, and at times the most sacred, and it is then most dangerous. Strong words are often said against the publican for the ruin he effects ; and no doubt there is a terrible account awaiting these men ; but in many instances the publicans would do little harm if their prey had not been prepared for them by parents, and friends. The manacles which bind the drunkard have been put on by a mother's hand, and have only been riveted in the public-house. The desire for intoxicating drink is not natural—drunkenness is not one of the evils which come “out of the heart.” The majority of the human family live and die abstainers. God has thrown around each of us a wall of defence against strong drink, and, if that wall were strengthened, and buttressed, by the teaching, and example, of parents, and teachers, drunkenness would be unknown. Our national evil is self-caused, and many, who are never injured themselves, are the cause of untold evils to others.

Take an example :—It is Christmas time, when every

heart is tender and impressible. In yonder Christian home the morning has been spent in praise and prayer, and kindly gifts, and words of love. The dinner has ended, the dessert is spread,—nuts and oranges, and the “many good things the good earth yields,” and, like Satan in Paradise, the decanter is in the midst. Then Willie, the bright-eyed, happy-faced pet of the family, is brought in. He is greeted by a shout of welcome from the rest of the children, and feels that he is the hero of the hour. The wine is poured out, a full glass for the father and mother, and half a glass for each of the children; and Willie eagerly holds out his hand for the fatal gift. The children smile, and the mother says that Willie shall join with the rest in drinking his father's health, and in wishing him a merry Christmas. A few drops of wine are poured into the glass, and by the aid of sugar, and water, it is made palatable, and the mother's hand puts the glass to the child's lip, and, though he drinks with a wry face, the warm kiss of the mother, the loving smile of the father, and the shouts of the rest of the children, tell him he has done a right, and brave, thing. Joyous, however, as the group appears, it is a scene over which angels weep, and demons rejoice. If that mother could see the results of that act, there is not a poison under heaven she would not rather have given the child than that. For what has been done? The barrier which God threw around the child has been weakened, while an appetite has been created that no human power can control. Wait a while, and Willie will need no sugar in the glass. You may see him when the company leaves draining the glasses that have been used by others. Farther on you may see him, when returning from his holidays, running into the refreshment-room for the flask of spirits which he will hide in his breast. Yet farther on you may see his mother waiting in silence, and sorrow, the sound of the scuffling feet, which betoken a scene which she hides from every eye but her own; and a little farther, and Willie

sleeps in a drunkard's grave, while his parents follow him to the tomb with broken hearts.

Men say it is a mystery that the child of such parents should make such an end. But is there any mystery in it? I think not. They have broken a hedge, and the serpent has bitten them.

If the child should be so favoured as not to meet the enemy at home, as soon as he leaves his home the probability is that he will meet it in the first house he enters. Is he invited to spend a social evening with his young friends? before the evening is over, in the majority of cases, the wine will be offered—offered too by Christian men and women. If the reeling drunkard were to present the glass, the child would shrink from it with horror; but when it is presented by a man pre-eminent for wisdom, and piety, or by a lady, whose praise is on every lip, the offer can scarcely be resisted. It will require more moral courage to say "No" under such circumstances than a child is likely to possess, and so in many instances the "table," even in a Christian home, becomes "a snare."

When the child has to go to business, his difficulties will increase. There will be the example of those by whom he is surrounded, and to whom he has to look for instruction, and, added to this, there will be customs with which the drink is always associated. If the boy remains firm to his early training, he will have to do it at a painful cost.

When the lad goes out into the world will his position be improved? One look around will give a sad reply. At the corner of every street there is a drink-shop, made as attractive as wealth and skill can make it, and, as if this were not enough, the great statesman who said it was "the duty of a State to make it easy to do right and difficult to do wrong," so violated his own principle, that the grocer, and the pastry-cook, have been called in to aid the spirit merchant, and publican, in their work of temptation. And, to complete our

national dishonour and our children's destruction, we—calling ourselves a Christian land; placing at the coronation of our monarchs the Word of God in their hands, to show that God's law is to be their rule; and compelling our legislators to ask Divine guidance every time they meet—have set aside the Divine law, and, while commanding every trade that is beneficial to man, to rest on the Sabbath-day, have decreed that an exception shall be made in the case of the only trade that promotes the spread of irreligion, ignorance, and misery! Thus at every corner, on God's holy day, the snare is spread for the youth, by the decree of our legislators, and the sanction of our Queen! The children have asked for bread, and we offer them poison! They cry, "Lead us not into temptation," and we tempt them on every side!

"We widen and strew with flowers the way
Down to eternal ruin."

I think I have said enough to show that the children are in terrible peril, and if further proof is wanted it may easily be obtained. From the outcast who, with the smile of an angel on her face, and the agony of a demon in her heart, parades our streets—from the madman in his cell—from the criminal in his chains—from the myriads who have perished, and the multitudes who are pressing after them to destruction—there comes in tones of thunder a warning cry. They were once little children, and the Church blessed them, and mothers, as they parted their soft hair and looked into their bright eyes, said, "These same shall comfort us;" and yet, despite of tears, and prayers, and blessing, they have perished, and, as human nature is the same, and the enemies unchanged, we may well look with fear, and trembling, at the little ones around.

II. The text reveals to us the will of God concerning the children. It declares that it is *not His will that one of them*

should perish. In looking at this we must bear in mind that God not only means what He says, but much *more* than He says. It is so when He says, "Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out!" It means, not merely, that He will not reject those who come, but that He will welcome and pardon and save them. It is so when He says, "The bruised reed I will not break." It means that He will strengthen, and bind it up, and make it a pillar in His house, to go out no more for ever. And so here, when He says, "It is *not* His will that they should perish," it means that it *is* His will they should be saved. There may be great difficulties in the way of their salvation, but it is not impossible; no child has the brand of reprobation on its brow. He who made them all, loves them all. That this is so, is seen in His nature, in His words, and in His works. Hence we may build our schools, form our Bands of Hope, and give ourselves to the great work of their salvation, without mis-giving, and cheer ourselves in our toil by the old cry of Peter the Hermit—*God wills it; God wills it.*"

III. The text clearly intimates our duty to the little ones. God's will is our law. If He wills their salvation it is our duty to labour for it. Indolence, and indifference here is sin. It is not enough that we do not tempt, or hinder them. It is not enough that we hire the school-master to train, and the policeman to protect, them. Personal service is demanded as we value the smile of God; we must shrink from no sacrifice, and spare no toil. Do you ask what you can do for this purpose? I answer first, employ all the power you possess to remove temptations out of their way. At home you must have strong drink for your "stomach's sake and other infirmities," keep it with your other medicines, and use it with equal care. You do not put your razor, pistol, or poison, within the reach of your

children, why then should you put that which is infinitely more dangerous and destructive? At least, let me implore you not to put it on your table when the children of *others* are present. If you are prepared to risk the salvation of your *own* children, do not endanger the children of other people. See to it that the blood of souls be not found upon your hands.

Then, as citizens, employ all the power you possess to put away the legalized temptations which exist. Especially let me beseech you to look at the question of the opening of drink-shops on the Sunday. This is done by *law*, and you, as a part of the *law-makers*, will be held responsible if it continues. We are always responsible for the existence of every evil which we have the power to destroy. I lay, therefore, this matter upon your consciences. We close the mill, the shop, and the museum, and why should these places be open? The legislation is exceptional. I ask on whose account is the exception made? Is it on account of the Church? or our legislators? or our merchants? or our manufacturers? or our tradesmen? or the true working-men? I answer, *No!* If this statement is doubted, let the doubter next Sunday examine the class of men who will be found there. I have gone again and again, that I might not be mistaken, and I have found the company to consist entirely of the foppish, the ignorant, the dirty, and the vicious; and, as I have seen these places empty on the Sabbath evening, I have wished that our legislators were there that they might decide for themselves whether these are the persons on whose account we ought to insult God, and dishonour our country. This question rests mainly with the Christian Church. As soon as the Christian people of this country will it, the iniquitous traffic will cease; and surely, if we can agree on nothing else, we might agree to unite our influence to free our land from this. As soon as the Church agrees to make this a vital question, her will will be obeyed,

and when this evil is removed, the angels of heaven and earth will rest upon her.

We must next see to it that we give the children an example which they can *all safely imitate*. Remember that children are born imitators. Every look, word, act is noticed. Their minds are "soft as wax to receive an impression, and rigid as marble to retain it." Hence we cannot but exert a tremendous influence over them. From us they learn what to do, and what to avoid. We should therefore never utter a word which we would not like them to repeat, nor perform an act we would not wish them to imitate. To take strong drink may not endanger you, but it may be full of danger to the little ones who are around, and therefore I beseech you, in the name of my Master, not to put a stumbling-block, or an occasion to fall, in your children's way.

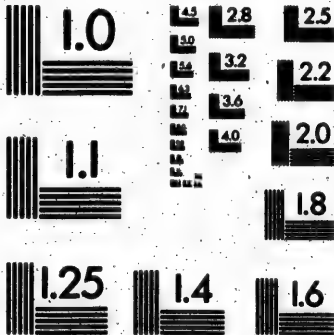
We must also be careful to give the children correct information. They know nothing by intuition, but have to obtain their knowledge from us. How eagerly they ask, and how implicitly they receive the reply! Their father's word is to them an end of all controversy. Be careful then not to mislead them on any subject, and especially on the important subject of strong drink. An error here may be fatal. Don't tell them it is a good creature of God, except in the sense in which you say it of gunpowder, and strychnine. Do not perpetuate the delusion which has ensnared and ruined so many of the present generation. Tell them it is a "mockery"—a "deceiver"—to be avoided as they would avoid a serpent, or an adder, and a sober country shall be your reward.

Set to work and establish a Band of Hope in the church to which you belong. Appeal to the children's social nature, and so counteract the temptations by which they are surrounded. This is a part of the week-day work to



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which every church is called, and no church is blameless that neglects it. A church may do without a spire, an organ, or even a choir, but it cannot do the work of the present day without a Band of Hope. Those things are luxuries; this is a necessity. Till this is done, her children will not be safe.

Lastly, we must give ourselves to prayer. Without God we can do nothing. Think of the enemies with which you have to contend; think of your own weakness, and then "to your tents, O Israel!" Remember you can "move the Arm that moves the world." Plead with the children; plead with the parents; plead with our legislators; but, above all, plead with God, and in answer to your cry He will pour you out a blessing there shall not be room to receive.

Do you need incitements to engage in this important work? Surely not; but if you do, let me remind you of the *children's value*. When the two "Woolwich Infants" sank in the dock, every newspaper in England recorded it, and no pains, or cost, were spared to recover them. But what are these to a God-made little child? Looked at in the light of the Cross and in the light of eternity, we shall see our richest treasures to be but baubles by its side.

"The sun is but a spark of fire,
A transient meteor in the sky;
The child, immortal as its sire,
Can never die."

Think also of the *children's danger*. If a fire were to break out, and the news came that a single child—ay, a beggar's child—was in danger of perishing in the flames, how soon would this service end, and all of us gladly imperil our lives to attempts its deliverance? Here there is not *one* child in danger, but *millions*, and the danger is not merely to the body, but the soul. The destructive agent

is at work as I speak, and, unless the children are soon saved, they will be lost for ever.

"Men of God, to you they cry,
'Save, O save us ere we die—
Die in dark despair!'"

Think also of the *Divine will*. God is the Father of the children; we are the servants. He will come by and by and ask, "Where are the children?" and woe to us if, through our selfishness or idleness, they have perished.

Think of the *reward you will have if you succeed*. There will be the joy of witnessing their happiness here; there will be the bliss of enjoying their eternal gratitude, and love; there will be the ecstasy of hearing the Great Father say, "Well done, good and faithful servant!"

Can we hesitate in the presence of considerations such as these? Surely not. The unnatural appetite shall be overcome; the early-formed habit be broken; the dangerous custom be given up. Every needed sacrifice shall be made, and every possible effort on behalf of the little ones put forth. The lambs shall be sheltered and defended as well as fed; and, by the blessing of God upon our labours, we shall at last stand before the great white throne and say, "Here are we, and the children Thou gavest us!"

XIII.

*THE FAITHFUL SERVANT AND HIS REWARD.*¹

"His lord said unto him, Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord."—MATT. xxv. 23.

THIS is one of the most solemn and instructive chapters in the Bible. It is complete in itself. It shows us our position, our duty, and the results of our conduct, whatever that conduct may be. Warned from it that our present state of existence is not final. That before each of us is eternal life, or eternal death, and that our position hereafter, depends upon our conduct here. The parable of the ten virgins, shows us our duty to *ourselves*. That we must watch over our own hearts, and take care to live with our lamps trimmed, and our lights burning; so that at last we may not have to utter the sad wail: "They made me a keeper of vineyards, but my own vineyard I have not kept." The parable of the servants, shows us our duty to *others*, and warns us against selfishness in religion, against shutting ourselves up in our own privileges, and pleasures. Reading, meditating, and praying, but forgetful of the perishing ones around. The one parable cries Watch! The other cries Work! Then in the last verses, in words that thrill and awe the most careless, we have a rehearsal of the scenes of the last day, and we see that in the transactions of that day there will be nothing arbitrary. That the freedom and

¹ A Funeral Sermon for Joseph Livesey, the founder of Teetotalism.

responsibility of men will be respected. That we each have our destiny in our own hands. That the obedient, will receive eternal life, and that the rebellious, will be doomed to eternal death, and that there will be no respect of persons.

In the text we see a *faithful servant*, and *his reward*, and I select it as descriptive of the life and reward of our venerable and departed friend, Joseph Livesey, the father of the great Temperance reformation.

I. *Look at the faithful servant.* There are several things respecting him that I wish you to notice, as illustrating our own position. He was a "servant," one who is dependent upon, and responsible to, another. It is important for us ever to bear in mind, that whatever be our position in the Church, or the world, this is the character of every one of us. I often hear men speak as if God had no claim upon sinners. They say, when urged to obey God's law, "Oh, I make no pretensions to being religious!" as if rebellion, or neglect, freed them from responsibility. This is a huge, and terrible blunder. The man who hid his talent, was as much a servant, as he who by diligent trading made his five talents into ten. And so with us; we are all servants, whether we own our Master or not; whether we obey Him or not. The only difference between us is, that some are "good and faithful," while others are "wicked and slothful." I pray you to see to it that you clearly ascertain the character you bear.

It marks an era in a man's life when he discovers this, and when seeing himself to be a rebel, he comes in penitence to the throne of grace, and obtains forgiveness. When losing his own will in the will of his Master, he can say, "I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." This period is clearly marked out in the Autobiography of our departed friend, and I give it in his own words:—

"I was about seventeen when I became acquainted with

a family of the name of Portlock, the heads of which, and some of the members, were decidedly religious. They were Baptists, and very kind to me. I was soon impressed with the importance of religion, and began to attend the Baptist Chapel. Charles, one of their sons, and Thomas Jolly, jun., and I, became close companions. Our souls seemed knit together, and many a happy night have we spent in talking upon religious subjects. The result was that Charles and I were baptized together, I believe, in the year 1811, in the Baptist Chapel, which stood where St. Saviour's has been newly erected. Thomas Jolly was baptized some time after. I felt a strong conviction that I was doing the will of God in this service, though it was in opposition to the wishes and entreaties of my grandfather and other relatives. To me it was a day of great enjoyment. I remember well, after the baptism was over, joining with great fervour in singing the hymn—

“ ‘Jesus! and shall it ever be,
A mortal man ashamed of Thee,
Ashamed of Thee, whom angels praise,
Whose glory shines to endless days!’ ”

“ The return of Sunday was to me a feast of good things; all the fervency of youth, and the zeal of a new convert were added to a deep conviction of the importance of religion. With what delight did I use to go, in my elogs, to Preston, to the evening prayer-meetings held in the vestry! I have still in my possession Watts' hymn-book, which I bought at the time. On the inside of the front cover is written, ‘Joseph Livesey's Book, 1811.’ On a blank leaf is the following: ‘Is any merry, let him sing Psalms. James v. 13.’ And at the end is this verse—

“ ‘Hope is my helmet, faith my shield;
Thy Word, my God, the sword I wield;
With sacred truth my loins are girt,
And holy zeal inspires my heart.’ ”

Happy will it be for each of us if we have made the same decision, and are following the same ~~Saviour~~. It is the only way to usefulness on earth and happiness in heaven.

The servant was entrusted with some of his master's property. He received "two talents"—a talent will represent about £250 of our money—so that he received £500. This money was not his own, but his master's. He was not the proprietor, but a steward. It is so with us; whatever we have belongs to another, and is only entrusted to us for a limited period. "What have we that we have not received?" "We brought nothing into the world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out." Men are often puffed up with conceit because they possess powers which are not possessed by others; but the very language that is used respecting them when they are said to be "talented" is borrowed from this parable, and should remind them of their responsibility to the Great Proprietor.

The talents bestowed upon the servants varied in their number: "To one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one; to every man according to his several ability." So it is with us; our talents vary; and some have many, some have few; but all have some. In the word "talent" we may include all we have, and all we are. Physical strength, moral power, social position, wealth, learning, influence, and religious privileges, are all talents, and are all the property of our Master.

These talents are given to us to be used according to the will of the Proprietor. Thus, not only open rebellion, but indolence is sin, sin that, if continued in, will bring the severest punishment. Our talents are left for a time absolutely at our own disposal. There is no coercion, no external interference; we may invest them, or waste them, or hide them, as we think best. It is so with all our talents, as we well know. Take wealth: we may spend it in luxury, on sin, or in doing good; in the service of God,

or of man, or of the devil ; we may make it a blessing, or a curse—" a friend that shall receive us unto habitations," or " a witness against us," whose testimony shall never be silent. So with speech : with it we may " bless God " or " curse men." And so with all the rest ; we may, *for a time*, use them as we please.

They are entrusted to us for a limited period ; the extent of that period is unknown. The Master, when He left us, told us that He should return when least expected. It is certain that He will return, but uncertain when. " Ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of Man cometh."

At the beginning of his life Mr. Livesey was not entrusted with many talents ; fewer it was scarcely possible for him to possess. He was born at Walton-le-dale, near Preston, on 5th March 1794. His parents were poor, hard-working people, of delicate constitution, and they both died when he was seven years of age. An old woman who kept a dame's school was his only teacher. On his parents' death he was taken to the home of his grandfather. Adverse circumstances deprived the grandfather of the little property that he possessed, and as there was " little to earn and many to keep," the orphan lad had to go into a damp cellar, and learn to work the handloom in order to eke out the family income. As one looks at the boy, inheriting consumptive tendencies from both his parents, with the merest rudiments of education, toiling from early morning till late at night in a cellar, the dark of which produced rheumatism that became his life's torment, it seems scarcely possible to imagine a more unpromising beginning, and difficult to name the talents which he possessed. He had, however, two, and these two were beyond price. They were strong common-sense and a resolute will ; and with these he triumphed over all his difficulties, secured for himself a position of great social influence, became a public benefactor, and won a name that princes might envy.

II. *Let us look at the conduct of the servant.* He was not elated with pride because he had more than others, nor was he depressed with envy because he had less. He realized his responsibility, and at once set to work to make the best possible use of the trust committed to him. Thus every day that passed recorded "something attempted, something done." He invested his talent wisely; he not only guarded what he had, but added to it daily, and thus, as we say, "he made money." We are told he was "good" and "faithful;" his goodness referring to his character, and his faithfulness referring to his conduct. While faithful to his master, he was good to his brethren, and the manifestation of his goodness is seen in the revelation that follows. We are told in the following verses that he fed the hungry, gave drink to the thirsty, clothed the naked, befriended the stranger, visited the sick, and sought and saved the lost. His creed was shown by his conduct; his loyalty to God, by his love to man. And we may depend upon it that a religion that is not so shown, however correct may be its creed, and however orderly its ceremonies, will be found at the last day to be "vain." Faith without works is dead, and from such faith the living God turns away with abhorrence, and cries, "Little children, let no man deceive you; he that doeth righteousness is righteous." "He that loveth not his brother, whom he hath seen, how can he love God, whom he hath not seen?" "Whoso hath this world's goods, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?" "Pure religion, and undefiled before God and the Father, is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world." In this way Mr. Livesey's religion was shown, and there is not a word in the recital of the good deeds of the faithful servant contained in the 35th and 36th verses that may not be addressed to him.

In his efforts to lift up the fallen, and comfort the sorrowful, he was met at every step by the giant curse of intemperance. The drinking habits of the people frustrated all his attempts to place them in their right position. With his natural practical energy he set to work to find a remedy for the evil. Having found that remedy in total abstinence, he at once gave himself to its advocacy. Like the Apostle Paul, he could say, "This one thing I do;" and for many years his supreme anxiety was for the spread of the Temperance cause. In this work he was greatly disappointed at the opposition he met with from the Christian Church. Hard and cruel things were said against both him, and the movement he had inaugurated. Insult, and persecution, were employed; and, irritated by the conduct of those who knew not what they did, Mr. Livesey disassociated himself from the visible Church, and remained apart to the end of his life. It would have been better if he had borne the rebuffs he met with, and so have fought the battle of Temperance *inside* the Church, as well as outside. The Church is the natural home of Temperance, and it is only as the Church identifies herself with it, that permanence, and victory, is ensured. Had he retained his position it would have prevented a great deal of unnatural friction, and have greatly benefited both the Church, and the cause of Temperance. However, it is not for me to "judge another man's servant." I have no doubt but that he did that which he thought best, and the wisest of us are not always wise.

The Apostle John says, "He that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him." And Coleridge says—

"He prayeth best, who loveth best,
All things both great and small;
For the good Lord, that loveth us,
He made and loveth all."

Judged by this test, Mr. Livesey's religion was of a high

type. He loved all God's creatures. Loved flowers, and trees, and mountains, and the mighty sea. Loved birds and horses, and all the dumb creatures around him. Especially he loved his fellow-man, and the weaker, and poorer, and the more degraded, the deeper, and the more tender his love. Little children were drawn to him like particles of steel to a magnet, and no matter how poor, or ignorant, or miserable, they were, he ever showed himself their friend, and spared no pains to elevate, and bless them. Illustrations of this, press in on every side; but my space will not allow me to mention them. Let me content myself with one. For some years he used to carry in his pocket cards, with this inscription upon them: "To promote cleanliness, and decency, Mr. Livesey will pay any hairdresser one penny who cuts the hair of this poor boy;" and wherever he met with an unkempt waif, he gave him one of these cards. In this way habits of neatness, and cleanliness, were induced in many a lad, for whom no one else had any practical sympathy.

For sorrowing, suffering, and sinful among his fellow-townsmen, his care was constant. His life was one long effort to benefit them. To accomplish this, he spared no money, or time, or labour. He would employ no deputy in this work, but with earnest iteration he watched over them as if they were his own children. Forty years ago he could say, "There is not a working man in Preston with whom I have not a personal acquaintance, and with whose habits I am not acquainted." He used to say, "Christ's life was a continual act of blessing. He went about doing good; and if we profess to be His followers we ought to copy His example." That he did this in a pre-eminent degree is well known to all who had the privilege of a personal acquaintance. His modesty, however, was such, and his way of doing good so gentle and unobtrusive, that a tithe of his benevolence will never be known till the final

revelation. What I know of his lifework, warrants me in saying, that I have never known his equal, and that in my estimation the best possible course for the Christian Church to take is, in this respect, to imitate his example. We are sent "to every creature;" yet there are multitudes around us moving with a hell within, to a deeper hell beyond, and no man cares for their souls. No Christian enters their filthy abodes, and no loving hand is held out to strengthen and save them. Every now and then some "bitter cry," like a yell of the lost, startles us from our sinful indifference, and we form a Committee, or appoint a Commission, or engage a Bible-woman, and then go quietly to sleep again. Convention after convention has been called to discuss the question, "How to reach the masses." The Church could reach them all in a month. *A Church of Joseph Liveseys would do it.* Hear what he says on this subject:—

"There is need, again and again to remind our teetotallers of this much-neglected duty of *visitation*. Unless *we go to the people*, the great-mass will remain untaught and uncared for. In all our Temperance labours we should get as *low down* as possible. It is not the righteous, but *sinner*s that need our help. Christ condensed all the commandments into *two*, one being this—'Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.' But how can we be said to love our neighbour whom we never see, never call upon, and never inquire after? Many teetotallers are fond of 'demonstrations,' but those who take a wider and more Christian view delight more in visiting and teaching the residents of the *slums*, helping the downcast, remembering that we are all of one flesh, children of the same parent. Here indeed shines the bright example of the Lord Jesus. The interests of the poor, the wicked, the lost, the friendless, were ever near His heart. He delighted in the companionship of the lowly. The Jews would have condemned to death the woman taken in adultery, but what says Jesus? 'Neither

do *I* condemn thee; go, and sin no more.' Read His conversation with the woman of Samaria—one who had had five husbands, and was then living with a man who was not her husband. How different the tone of His discourse to that of many of His followers! The same kind and compassionate feeling was displayed at Simon's supper-table, where the woman, a great 'sinner,' washed His feet with her tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head. What a contrast is the teaching of Christ's parables with that of others! The prodigal son's return, and the father's heart overflowing with compassion; the good Samaritan taking pity and relieving the man who had fallen among thieves, and who was passed by and left suffering by the priest and the Levite—these are certain lessons of love and pity which we should all imitate. If one in a hundred go astray, He teaches us that we should seek him out and bring him back, rejoicing more over his restoration than over the ninety and nine who remained in the fold. It is a question for Temperance people to consider seriously how greatly behind they are—in love, compassion, pity, kindness, and self-denial—their Great Teacher, who went about doing good. We want more *practical religion*; more feeling, more sympathy for the sufferings of others. We should seek out, and save, if possible, those who appear to be lost. 'The want of sympathy,' said a late judge, 'is the sin of this age.' If *visiting* was made a Christian duty, not merely the duty of a committee, but the duty of all, according to their time and opportunities, we should then have a full acquaintance with each other, learning to bear one another's burdens, and thus fulfil the law of Christ. The influence of *caste* seems to be getting worse. A change is greatly needed. As much as possible we should all mix together, the rich and the poor, the wise and the unwise, the good and the wicked. Not that we need to renounce either private property or private rights, but the mixing

should be one of kindness, humility, love, charity, and goodwill.

"I do deeply lament the indifference of many people in view of the overspreading calamities of our country from the drinking system. Ignorance, poverty, vice, crime, lunacy, and irreligion abound; and yet how many persons are content with 'attending their place of worship,' and though they weekly—some daily—pass the doorsteps of thousands of poor souls lost by taking drink, their 'bowels of compassion' towards such seem wholly inactive. Ministers ought, like their Master, to be the 'friends of publicans and sinners.' If a minister wishes to be really useful, he should visit the 'slums.' If he wants to get a correct view of the morals and conduct of the people, he should be in the streets—the worst streets—on a Saturday night until public-house closing time. By such an example, members of his congregation would also be induced to labour and seek out and try to save those that are being lost. What should we say of our street-sweepers if they were always sweeping in the clean places, avoiding altogether the filth and dirt of the back streets, accumulating and spreading their pestiferous effects all around? What should we say of our medical men if infectious diseases were allowed to get so rife as to destroy thousands for want of their attendance, their time being taken up with those who least need them? I hold it equally important that quite as great efforts should be made to remove *moral* as physical evil, especially by those who are paid for doing the work.

"If the ministers of religion would determine upon this and take the lead, there are, I believe, in every congregation a number who would be glad to engage in the work. With true Christian zeal, with virtuous self-denial and perseverance, on the part of the religious and Temperance people, I should have no doubt of a great change in the conduct and habits of the people. Multitudes of our fellow-

creatures are lost for want of being looked after by those who are able. Many live and die, nobody caring for them.

"I know that we have a number of good men who delight in this work; and the number would be vastly increased if the leading spirits in each society would make a fresh start. It is to help such that I propose giving a few hints as to how they should proceed in their work. I said before that no time can be wrong for engaging in the work of *visitation*. But I always found Sunday forenoons the best of all times. The men are then at home, and often on the stool of repentance from the previous night's fuddle. The drink-shops are closed; it is the publican's half-holiday, and we should take advantage of it. I will here suppose that we have only two hearty devoted persons from each place of worship (and this would make, say in such a town as Liverpool, the goodly number of at least 600 teetotal missionaries); let these make their arrangements on the Saturday night as to the time and place of labour for the following forenoon, and provide themselves with plenty of handbills; or, if more desirable, let them follow our old plan, meeting together and starting from a central room. Let these missionaries go to where the hard drinkers reside, —and the difficulty is not to find where they do reside, but a district without them,—and I should always give preference to the neighbourhood of the church or chapel where the visitors attend. Their calls will have to be guided partly by what they learn in the neighbourhood (for if they ask to be shown the houses where the drinkers live there will be plenty ready to give the information), and partly by what they see, for dirty door-steps, broken windows, and other indications of the effects of drink will not be long to seek. Of course in these visitations the backsliding teetotallers will be specially looked after. Our friends, with papers in hands, and a familiar 'good morning,' will soon get a hearing. In many cases they will not need

to ask leave, but will be invited to come in. The poor fellows who are enslaved to drink are apt to cherish the idea that nobody cares for them; and when you go and sit down by their fireside, and talk to them in a kind and sympathizing spirit, they are delighted to find that they have some one who is still anxious for their welfare. The wife is sure to be with you, and to do all she can to make your words impressive, and the children listen with delight. In most cases you will find that these men have tried teetotalism, and they will tell you how happy they were when they kept it. If there should be opposition (as there will be in some places), let no hard words escape, or bad temper be shown, and avoid wasting time by any controversy, taking care to close the call by leaving them something to read, which is a good preparation for the next visit. These visitors will not go many times before they will be known, and their calls expected; and the household improvements even by a few visits will soon be visible. This I would call the first part of our teetotal work among the masses.

"Another work will unavoidably follow. In all the back streets on Sunday forenoons are groups of idlers, many of them young men, whose attention will be excited by the visitors with papers in their hands; and in most cases they will not be allowed to pass without some observations. To stop and speak to these people is an important duty; it is perhaps the only chance that can be had of meeting with them disengaged, and out of the drink-shop. This chance should always be embraced, and good tact, good temper, and great forbearance will be here required. Beware of long controversies, and avoid all offensive reference to religion. Keep to teetotalism, and to the benefits and happiness of abstaining from drink. These little gatherings are of great importance, and in such places as I have in view they can be improvised any time. Visits like these, conducted in a

Christian spirit, cannot fail to benefit the masses, and they constitute the only agency by which we can reach a great majority of drinking people, and especially the young. Next, if we would do the work well, is to arrange as many plain, homely, public meetings as possible in the densely-populated parts of our towns. Every street should be made to feel the agitation in some shape or other. If it be winter, obtain the loan of schoolrooms, or outhouses, or cottages—if no better can be done. These meetings should be made well known, stating that a number of reformed characters will attend to give their experience. Our plan used to be this—to send a man round all the streets in the locality with a watchman's rattle for an hour or so before the time. The children were specially attracted, and would follow the man in his round, carrying home the announcement. By these inexpensive means meetings get well known and well attended. Many such gatherings has our old friend 'Dicky Turner' (author of the word 'teetotal') announced with his rattle. Of course in summer buildings will seldom be wanted, as the meetings will be generally held in the open air. I never found a difficulty in getting a hearing in the 'slums,' especially from the females; and *for their sakes alone* we should exert ourselves in every place. We keep complaining of the increase of female drinking, and what are we doing to lessen it? Next to nothing, except denouncing 'Gladstone's Wine Bill'! Let it, however, be distinctly understood that the plan I advocate is neither intended to supplant nor supplement the present modes of labour which have been proved to be really effective, but to take its proper place in the front rank of the agencies for a Temperance reformation.

"Now the kind of work I have referred to should not be spasmodic, similar to a 'month's mission.' We should go on the year round, all taking a part; with weekly meetings in central situations, constant agitations among the masses

in the back streets, and Sunday labours similar to what I have described, better days I hope are in prospect, but not without sound principles, and more energy in working them out. If Paul's spirit 'was stirred in him' when he saw the city of Athens wholly given to idolatry, ought we not to feel the same when we see the worship of Bacchus eclipsing all others? We should be like the early disciples, of whom it was said, 'They that had turned the world upside down are come hither also.' *I recommend nothing but what I have practised myself, and of which I understand all the details.*

"Unpleasant as it seems to many to be mixed up with poor people, it always seemed to be my duty and pleasure to visit such. When I have travelled abroad, or visited the large towns at home, I never sought out 'the lions of the place,' but always preferred to see the state of the *slums* where misery and destitution had taken up their abode. Though pained at what I witnessed, I always felt pleased that I had sought out the wretched and miserable, especially the great sufferers through drink, and had secured the opportunity of giving them good advice and encouragement amid their poverty. And the longer I live the more am I convinced that in this, both Temperance people and religious people are coming far short of their duty. Ours is a mighty enterprise, but an uphill work; and yet it is the most important step in social reform that good men have attempted in our day. It lies at the basis of success in all other attempts to benefit our fellow-creatures."

In these most wise, and important words, Mr. Livesey says that, in urging those he addressed to give themselves to the work of doing good, he recommended nothing which he had not practised himself. The proofs that this "boasting is found a truth" are to be met with on every side. Let me briefly name them:—

First, He sought the *material* good of those around him. He fed the hungry, clothed the naked, improved their dwell-

ings, and sought in every way to promote their health and happiness. Finding in his visiting, that the sleeping arrangements of many of the poor were most miserable, he set to work to remedy them. He persuaded the wives to empty the old bedticks, and wash them, and he provided a supply of chaff to fill them; where the ticks were utterly rotten, he assisted them to get more, and gave himself no rest till they could thus sleep in comfort. On one occasion he met with a poor sufferer lying on damp straw, covered with ulcers and bed-sores; he at once went home, took his own feather-bed, and, calling a cab, carried it, with the necessary clothes to cover him, to the poor friendless sufferer. His work in this direction grew upon him to such an extent, that, much against his will, he had to appeal to others to help him. In response to that appeal, a society was formed, with the Vicar as president, called "The Bedding Charity;" and he was thus enabled to provide thousands of clean beds for the needy and suffering poor. In 1862, in consequence of the American War, the cotton famine began, which, from its being entirely dependent on the cotton trade, was felt most severely in Preston, and continued for nearly four years. Mr. Livesey was one of the first to realize the nature and extent of the calamity. He used his influence to summon a town's meeting, presided over by the Mayor, to devise means for helping the thousands of operatives that were out of work. He says that when they met—

"The general impression was, that we were too hasty, and that it was premature to commence giving relief, though the result proved that we did not move a day too soon. We had prepared resolutions, and got the consent of parties to move and second them. The Rev. J. Owen Parr, the Vicar, with a short speech, moved the first resolution recommending a public subscription, which was seconded by Mr. Bairstow, upon which Mr. T. B. Addison rose, and made an elaborate speech against the resolution, urging that

relief should be given only through the Board of Guardians. He seemed to have made a great impression upon the meeting; a pause ensued; no one rose to reply, although the meeting called by circular was attended both by ministers and private gentlemen. With me it was a moment of intense anxiety; I had laboured hard to bring this meeting about, and I feared that the ingenious appeal of the learned Recorder had frustrated all my hopes. Just as the motion was going to be put to the vote, I felt impelled to speak (although according to arrangement I was to speak to a later motion); and once on my legs, I felt no difficulty in replying to Mr. Addison. Warming up as I proceeded, I carried the meeting with me. Several others then followed, and the resolution was carried with only two dissentients, Mr. Addison and another. If ever I felt that I had rendered a service to humanity, it was by coming forward at this critical moment. A committee was appointed, the Vicar being chairman, and I vice-chairman, and afterwards all went on successfully."

Into this work Mr. Livesey threw himself with all his heart; and being one of his associates in the holy toil, I had a good opportunity of witnessing his zeal, and tact, and generosity, and I could keep you by the hour, recounting instances of Christian benevolence on the one hand, and of Christian heroism on the other. Suffice it, however, to say that £131,000 was distributed, and that 5,141,418 tickets were given out, and that of this gigantic work Mr. Livesey was the mainspring and guide.

His kindness was also shown in the efforts he made to promote the happiness of the poor and helpless. Amongst other things, he devised a plan for bringing a little sunshine into their lives by arranging for cheap trips to the seaside. He says:—

"All classes, excepting the very poorest, could enjoy themselves every summer by going with the cheap railway

trips. This led me to conceive the idea of arranging one for this class, which was eminently successful. Every summer, the poorest in the town, 'the halt, the lame, and the blind,' the scavengers, the sweeps, and workhouse people, have been treated to a railway trip to Blackpool, Southport, Fleetwood, or some other sea-bathing place. This annual treat commenced in 1845; it was entirely my own conception, and has been continued ever since, generally in the month of August. It has been called the 'Poor People's Trip,' the 'Old Women's Trip,' and the 'Butter-milk Trip;' the latter because, for a number of years, we took a truck-load of butter-milk with us for the use of our guests. The trip numbered at first 2000 to 2500, but in time it increased to 4000. It used to be an interesting sight to me to see the trains start one after another, every carriage crammed with the poor people as 'happy as princes.' It was the only 'out' many of them got during the whole year, and they would talk of it many a long day. Long before the time arrives, the old women will call to ask when the trip will come off, and describe their ailments, telling marvellous tales how much they were benefited the year before. I often think how much friendship and goodwill might be diffused among the poor, if the rich would but only mix more with them, and contrive for their enjoyments. They little think of the store of gratitude that is lodged in breasts covered with rags, for any one who becomes their benefactor."

Nothing affecting the welfare of the poor seemed to escape Mr. Livesey's notice. One case out of many I may name. He found that coal was mostly sold to the poor in bags, containing professedly half a hundredweight, or a hundredweight. On weighing these bags he found that they were considerably below their nominal weight, and he at once arranged to divide the town into districts, and fixing on points contiguous to the residences of the poor, he sent cart

loads of coal, with scales for weighing it, and sold it at a little more than cost price, thus giving the people the full advantage, and driving their robbers from the field.

Second, He sought the *social* good of his townsmen. Using his influence as a member of the Corporation and a Guardian of the Poor, he devoted himself to the removal of unhealthy residences; the straightening of streets; the promoting of open spaces, playgrounds, and parks; the providing of seats for the weak and the weary; the opening of drinking fountains for men and beasts—and thus doing all he could to promote the health and beauty of the town of which he was a citizen.

He took a prominent part in the political movements of his day. He was a strenuous and determined enemy to the Poor Law, and conducted a discussion of three nights' duration in the Preston Theatre with the chosen champion of that measure, Mr. James Acland. Though the law was passed, his opposition to it remained, and he succeeded for twenty years in preventing the erection of what he called "a bastille" in Preston. Of the Corn Laws he was a fierce opponent, taking an active part, in conjunction with John Bright, and Richard Cobden, in addressing meetings held in various parts of the country. He also started an illustrated weekly magazine, called *The Struggle*, to expose the evils of those laws. It had a large circulation, and he continued its publication till the laws were abolished. Indeed, for him to know of an evil was to ensure his antagonism to it, and of a benefit that could be conferred, was to ensure his support. He says, "I never could sit down and be quiet when I saw work wanted to be done, and I was able to render assistance." "My aim was always to devise something that would improve the condition of the working people."

Third, He sought also the *intellectual* good of the people. Having educated himself—and his education was carried on

in the face of the greatest difficulties—he set to work to educate those around him. As there was no provision for the Sunday training of adults, he opened his own cottage for that purpose, he taking the males, and his wife the females; and on the house proving too small to contain the scholars, he took a large room and met them there. Feeling from experience the difficulty there was in a working man getting a look at a newspaper, every paper costing sevenpence, he, on his own responsibility, opened his room for “a general reading-room.” The success of this was so great, that he opened other six reading-rooms in various parts of the town. Early in life he began to employ the printing press. He says, “Long before I attained my majority, I wrote many letters to the newspapers, generally condemnatory of some public vice.” He then issued placards bearing on the same subjects. From placards he went to pamphlets, and from pamphlets to magazines. In January 1831 he commenced *The Moral Reformer*, a magazine “bearing chiefly on moral questions, domestic management, and practical religion.” It contained articles so forcibly written, and of such high-toned morality, that they would have done honour to Cobbett or Franklin, and most of them were written by himself. In January 1834 he issued the first number of *The Temperance Advocate*. It was the first teetotal paper ever issued, and it is to-day the organ of the British Temperance League. Mr. Livesey may well say:—

“When I state that these periodicals, extending over the years 1832 to 1847, were got out amidst the toils of business, that most of the articles were written by myself, and that my general health at that time was not good, my friends may well join me in surprise as to how I was able to accomplish so much. But the fact is, whatever I engaged in, I pursued with as much energy as if the success depended upon my exertions alone.”

In 1844 he published the first number of the *Preston*

Guardian, a newspaper that still exists, and occupies a foremost place amongst the provincial papers of the country.

In addition to these undertakings, he issued a number of publications on various subjects; and looking at the record as given in his Autobiography, I am amazed at the work he accomplished; the more so when I remember that all this was done amidst the cares of a large family, and with the anxiety of creating and developing the business on which they were dependent, which for many years rested entirely upon himself.

Fourth, He laboured for the *moral* improvement of his race. Having been brought in early life to the feet of Jesus, he set himself to work to extend His kingdom. He at once became a Sunday-school teacher, then a prayer-leader, and then a successful lay preacher. His one desire was to elevate those around him. Early in his career, his attention was directed to the subject of Intemperance, and, with his customary zeal, he set himself to work, as I have remarked, to discover and apply a remedy. One of the first pamphlets he published was on that subject. For a long time no light appeared, but his hatred to the drink increased till, in 1831, he determined to abandon its use altogether. His own account of the matter is so clear that I give it in his own words:—

"It is now fifty years since I took my last glass. It was early in 1831. I often say it was the best I ever drank—the *best* because the *last*; and if I remain in my senses I shall never take another. I did not then understand the properties of alcoholic liquors, though I ought to have done, being 37 years of age. I have often said 'there is *outside* drunkenness and *inside* drunkenness.' I don't think any one noticed the effect which the liquor produced, but it led me to reflect, having six children, five of them boys, about whose future welfare I was very anxious, whether I ought not to *abstain* altogether. I resolved there

and then that I would never taste again, and this resolution I have kept religiously to the present moment. It has been no self-denial, but a great *self-enjoyment*, for though I have spent much time and no little money in promoting the cause of Temperance, I have been amply rewarded, first in my own personal enjoyments, and next in the sobriety and successes of my family. And I have also this pleasant assurance, that by my exertions thousands of families, here and elsewhere, have been made happy. I don't wish to boast, but my intense anxiety to rouse the feelings of my fellow-townsmen and others against this cursed drinking system has induced me to refer to my own case.

"The statement as to my having been *fifty years a teetotaller* being a matter of memory, I was glad to find the following in the July number of my *Moral Reformer*, published in 1831: 'So shocked have I been with the effects of intemperance, and so convinced of the evil tendency of moderate drinking, that since the commencement of 1831 I have never tasted ale, wine, or ardent spirits. I know others who are pursuing the same resolution, and whose only regret is that they did not adopt this course twenty years since.' And in the Preface to the same volume, I remark: 'I am often asked how I find time for all my work; and my answer is, the time which others spend at the pot-house, or in visiting and attending parties, I spend in active pursuits; and *never taking any liquor* at home or elsewhere, my head is seldom out of order; I lose no time in the evenings in extinguishing my reason, or in the mornings in trying to regain it.'

"The former paragraphs state the time I commenced my *personal* abstinence; the next will explain its *official* commencement, and how it was brought about in Preston. It is from Dearden's *Forty Years Ago*.

"In the year 1826, the philanthropists of America began to organize their forces to battle against the then main

curse of their country—the drinking of “ardent spirits.” These efforts were extended, and in 1829 the movement commenced in some parts of the United Kingdom. From that year up to 1831 societies pledging their members to abstinence from spirituous liquors began to multiply in our country, until they reached our town, which soon became the BIRTHPLACE OF TEETOTALISM! That there have been teetotallers in every age of the world no one doubts; here and there teetotalism had been put forth by individuals, but it was at Preston it first took “a form and shape;” at Preston it was that the first organization of forces was made for the dissemination of the true Temperance principle of PERSONAL ABSTINENCE amongst our town’s people; it was from Preston that the first Apostles of Teetotalism set out to convert the people of this kingdom to the belief that *all intoxicating liquors, as beverages, are not only unnecessary but injurious.* Dr. Lees, in his work, the *Text-Book of Temperance*, after noticing the movements in other places, speaking of Preston, says: “Here things were ripening to a head; here lived a well-known local Franklin, Mr. Joseph Livesey, who, having risen by self-denial, culture, and industry from the working-class, sought to extend to them the blessings of education, and to effect social and moral reform. With a keen Saxon insight he perceived the evil in their midst, and with cautious, persevering common-sense sought to apply the cure. No wonder the seeds of truth, falling into such genial soil, should speedily germinate into power and fruitfulness.”

“It was, however, soon discovered that the liberty to take beer and wine in moderation was a fatal source of backsliding. And hence arose a fierce controversy, which lasted for some time, as to the pledge; many who had become thorough abstainers maintaining that all the liquors alike containing alcohol should be excluded. To others at that time, and especially among the middle classes, this was

considered a dangerous doctrine, and likely to break up the Society. The Temperance reformers of the present day have no idea of the conflict that was kept up on this subject. To forbid wine and beer was declared an innovation upon both English and American Temperance orthodoxy. I, with many others, felt that there was no safety for our members without this, and we were determined to bring about the change. One Thursday (August 23, 1832), John King was passing my shop in Church Street, and I invited him in, and after discussing this question, upon which we were both agreed, I asked him if he would sign a pledge of total abstinence, to which he consented. I then went to the desk and wrote one out (the precise words of which I don't remember). He came up to the desk, and I said, "Thee sign it first." He did so, and I signed after him. This first step led to the next, for in the course of a few days, notice of a special meeting was given, to be held in the Temperance Hall (the Cock-pit), the following Saturday night, 1st September, at which this subject was warmly discussed. At the close of the meeting, I remember well a group of us gathering together, still further debating the matter, which ended in seven persons signing a new pledge, it being opposed by others. I subjoin the pledge and the names:—

"We agree to abstain from all liquors of an intoxicating quality, whether Ale, Porter, Wine, or Ardent Spirits, except as Medicines."

JOHN GRATRICK.
EDWD. DICKINSON.
JNO. BROADBELT.
JNO. SMITH.

JOSEPH LIVESKY.
DAVID ANDERTON.
JNO. KING."

Thus originated a movement which is changing the habits of the people of this country, and which De Quincey

declared was destined to be "the salvation of the Anglo-Saxon race."

I cannot leave this part of my subject without saying how completely Joseph Livesey's life refutes the absurd statement that teetotallers are "men of one idea." And what is true of him is as a rule true of his followers. I do not hesitate to say, that there is no movement for the benefit of man, or for the glory of God, of which teetotallers are not among the most generous and hearty supporters, and in support of which they are not in the forefront.

III. *Look at the faithful servant's reward.* After a long time the lord of this servant returns, and he is summoned to give in his account. He does so with joy. "Lord, thou gavest me two talents; behold I have gained two talents beside them." Then comes the reward, on which I must not dwell, but in which I trust we shall all share. First, he has his master's approval. "Well done, good and faithful servant." Secondly, he is raised to a higher position. "Thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things." Goodness and faithfulness bring moral power, and that power will sooner or later be recognised. It was so with Mr. Livesey. He steadily grew in the estimation of those around him. His talents more than doubled. He obtained intellectual power, social power, material power, and men looked to him for guidance, and applied to him for help. This was specially seen when, in July 1866, the Preston Bank suspended payment. When that terrible morning came, thousands of people in Preston, and the towns around, were plunged in sorrow. The directors were paralyzed; hope fled! Mr. Livesey heard the news, and at once went to the bank, and met the directors; he asked for a full statement of the accounts. His practical mind at once grasped them, and he saw there was a possibility of the bank being saved.

He knew his own power : he had become a ruler among men. He at once formed his plans, and laid them before the directors, and asked them if they would stand by him if he would take the helm ? They gladly agreed. He then went out, and addressed the despairing crowd that was around the doors, telling them what he thought, and what he was prepared to do ; and asking them if they would trust him ? Confidence was at once restored. Men who had come to the bank, with ruin staring them in the face, lost their fears, and in the most joyous manner gave their allegiance to the man on whose wisdom, and integrity, they knew they could rely. Having secured the confidence of the Preston shareholders, and depositors, he then went to the other Lancashire towns that were specially interested. Everywhere he was welcomed, everywhere he met with the same success, and the bank is now one of the most prosperous in the county. Knowing, as we do, the calamities which followed the stoppage of the Glasgow, Leeds, and other banks, we can easily understand that Mr. Livesey, referring to the position he took in that terrible emergency, should say, " In looking back upon this successful affair, my satisfaction seems only equal to the gratitude of my townsmen."

And who that was privileged to see that wonderful funeral, when thousands of people, magistrates, ministers of all creeds, politicians of all opinions, the rich and poor, from all parts of the country, gathered in reverent sorrow around his grave, could help feeling that a ruler, a prince, and a great man had fallen ? And who can doubt but that this honour went beyond the grave ? and that, qualified by long and faithful service here, he has been exalted to engage in higher forms of blessed service in heaven ?

Thirdly, his reward consisted in his being admitted to his master's presence. " Enter thou into the joy of thy lord." That is an honour of which we know but little. It is beyond our comprehension. We cannot imagine what is

meant by the joy of the Lord. It is often spoken of. It is the joy that was set before Christ when He undertook the redemption of man. It is a joy peculiarly His own; yet into that joy the faithful servant is admitted! I say we know little of it; but we do know that it is pure, and perfect, and permanent.

Into that joy our departed friend has, I doubt not, been admitted. He was naturally reticent about spiritual matters. This reticence grew upon him as life advanced. As the end approached, he fell asleep; and as the death-dew gathered upon his brow, all was calmness and peace. When the end came, the eyes opened for a moment, and the voice whispered, "Glory, glory," and "he was not, for God took him." "Having served his generation by the will of God, he fell asleep," September 2nd, 1884.

I want to say a few words to the members of this congregation. To each one I say, Remember that you *are a servant*, and are "wicked, and idle," or "good, and faithful." You must be one, and you can't be both. Have you bowed at the foot of the Cross? Have you said—

"Take my soul, and body's powers,
Take my memory, mind, and will,
All my goods, and all my hours,
All I know, and all I feel,
All I think, or speak, or do;
Take my heart, but make it new!"

If not, why not? and why not now?

Do you say, "I am His?" Then I ask you what are you doing with His talent? your money? your education? your social position? your influence? Remember, the Master is coming, and the great account must be rendered. Each of us shall be there. What a solemn moment it will be! We shall each have a clear perception of what we might have been, and done. The question will not then be as to our *creed*, but our *conduct*; not our *position*, but our *work*. "Lord, Thou gavest me," etc.

Have you only one talent? Use it well, remembering that the reward will be according to the work, not according to the number of the talents which were given.

Young men, look at Mr. Livesey's life, and let it arouse and stimulate you. Realize the glorious possibilities of your position. You cannot have greater disadvantages than he had; but you *have* far greater advantages—national advantages, social advantages, religious advantages—"upon you the ends of the world have come." Remember, that to whom much is given, of them much will be required. Come then to-night, and beholding the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world, promise that "the rest of your days, whether many or few, shall all be devoted to Him," and may God help you!

Fellow-abstainers, bear with me while I remind you that our departed friend has left us an example we shall do well to imitate. The three points I wish especially to name are his *intelligence*, his *conscientiousness*, and his *generosity*.

First, his intelligence. I mean, as an abstainer. Many join our ranks who never understand the questions involved. Some are influenced by habit, some by selfishness, some by feeling; and the result is, they are at the mercy of every wind that blows. If interest, or feeling, or fashion says "Abstain," they abstain; if they say "Drink," they drink. Hence, they are never to be relied upon. If any of you are in this position, set to work at once, and remedy it, so that you may be prepared to take your right place in the battle that is before us. Mr. Livesey's strength was in his intelligence. Guided by a casual remark of Benjamin Franklin as to the nature and properties of the drink, he saw that it was an impostor, that it never could give what it did not possess; and he gave himself heart and soul to the work of showing this to others; and in times of even severe sickness, no doctor, or number of doctors, could drive him from his conviction. His lecture on the

delusion of drink has had the largest circulation of any lecture ever printed.

A second point is his conscientiousness. Many of our friends become abstainers, and derive the benefits which abstinence brings, but we hear no more of them; they neither give, nor work, nor cheer those who are at work. This is a great injury to them, and a great loss to the Temperance movement. Is it nothing that millions of our fellow-countrymen are perishing, and that we have a sure and certain remedy? Surely interest, patriotism, Christianity, and conscience, combine to arouse us from our selfish lethargy, and lead us to be instant in season, and out of season, and at all costs to endeavour to save some, and remembering that, "To him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin." Joseph Livesey put his conscience into the work—hence his purse, his time, and his strength, were ever ready to spread the cause he loved so well.

The last point I wish to name is his generosity. I do not mean generosity in the sense of giving, though he was generous there, as was shown in many ways. I mean, however, generosity of spirit. Temperance men, from the outset, have been in danger of erring here. Seeing the path of duty clearly themselves, they became impatient with those who could not see as clearly, or move as fast, and sometimes they spoke more against persons, than practices. Let us remember that others think, as well as ourselves; and that though we may ascend the papal chair, others will not render to us the homage which we demand. No man is ever won by denunciation, or converted by bitter words. The "truth in love" is ever the most successful mode of propagating it; and as others bore with us, we must learn to bear with others. Mr. Livesey had this attribute in a remarkable degree. Hence all who knew him respected him. Though foremost in political

contests, he had till his death the friendship and admiration of his political opponents; while the closed shutters and drawn blinds of the public-houses, as the funeral procession passed through the streets of Preston, showed that the firmest principles might exist in harmony with the most generous spirit. God and truth are with us, and they that are in the right can afford to be generous.

And now my work is done, and we must separate, not to meet again till the day is ended. Let us each endeavour so to live that the world may be the better for our having been in it, and that at last the Lord may be able to say to us, "Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

XIV.

"A GOOD SOLDIER OF JESUS CHRIST."¹

2 TIM. ii. part ver. 3.

THERE are many military allusions, and figures, in the New Testament. The reason is very clear. It was a military age. The sword was supreme. Rome was mistress of the world. Her legions were to be found everywhere. Hence these figures would be understood by all. It was especially natural that Paul should use military phraseology. He was then at Rome under military care, and would be constantly hearing of military matters. He knew what was meant by being a soldier, and hence in writing to his beloved son in the gospel, Timothy, he summed up the wish of his heart in urging him to be a good soldier of Jesus Christ. And it is because I regard the text as being the best description of Mr. Mack, that I could find in the Bible, that I have selected it for our meditation. I do not come to-night to indulge in anything like fulsome adulation of our departed friend. It is not at all in my line. As a rule, I strongly object to what are called funeral sermons. In the whole of my thirty years' ministry, I believe I have never preached half-a-dozen of such sermons. But while there is a time to be *silent*, there is also a time to *speak*, and, in my judgment, if ever it was right to preach a funeral sermon, it is right in the case of him whose loss we deplore. Not that even he needs it to

¹ A Sermon preached on the death of Mr. James Jermyn Mack, of Bootle, Liverpool.

make you revere his memory. His noble life has enshrined that in the hearts of thousands. The sorrow that has gone through the whole town, the wonderful funeral which so many of us witnessed, where every person in the vast crowd was a mourner, the gap in our ranks, which must yawn and sadden us for many a day to come, is the best testimony to his worth.

I have not come then to praise him. He would be the first to forbid that. But I have come to speak of what he was, in the hope that many in this crowded audience may be led to follow him, as he followed Christ. It is said that once a young lad stood before a beautiful statue. He gazed in wonder at the marvellous production of the sculptor's hand, and then, lifting his eyes to heaven, slowly and reverently said, "I, too, will be a sculptor."

I want to-night, by God's help, so to put our sainted friend before you, that some in this audience may be led to say, "I, too, will be a Christian."

I.—*Let us see what is implied in being a SOLDIER.*

First, A soldier is a person who has *enlisted* in an army. He is not *born* a soldier. He was not taken *captive*, and compelled to serve against his will. He had the power of *choice*. He had looked at the reasons for, and against, entering the army, and at last he enlisted, and so became a soldier. It was entirely his own doing, and in that sense he may be called a volunteer.

Secondly, *He is the PROPERTY of the king.* He gives up his free agency. He gives up his very name. He is known and called by the *number* he bears. He knows no will but that of the sovereign. In all places, and at all times, he belongs to the king.

Thirdly, *He is PROVIDED for by the king.* He must take off his *own* clothes, whether they are of best broad-

cloth, or of corduroy. He must be *clothed*, and *fed*, and *armed* by the king.

Fourthly, *He must always wear his regimentals.* A soldier can always be recognised as such. It is not so of any other class in the community. If a stranger were to come into this crowd, he could not allot us to our different occupations, but the *soldier* he would select at once. As soon as he has enlisted, he wears the ribbons in his hat, and when he is sworn in, he puts on the military dress, and this he has to wear as long as he is a soldier.

Fifthly, *He is prepared for trial, and conflict.* Soldiers are the result of *war*, and if there were no war there would be no *soldiers*. He *enlisted to fight*. For this purpose he is *armed*, and *trained*, and *drilled*. All this is the *means* to an *end*, and the end is the solitary watch, the long march, the bloody field. He does not throw down his arms, or complain when the trumpet sounds. He listens to it. He understands its language, and at once obeys.

II.—*What is implied in being a soldier of Christ?*

It is implied that Christ is a king—that He has enemies—that He has an army—and that the person spoken of belongs to *this army*.

And it *is* so. Every Christian knows by experience that whatever else he may not be, he *is a soldier*, and that it is only by being a *good soldier*, that he can hope to gain the crown.

Let me then, for a moment, remind you, of what is involved in this, and in doing so I have to glance at the ground we have already passed, and I want to speak to you—who are the soldiers of Christ.

First, You have *enlisted*; you were not born a soldier; you were a *stranger*, and a *foreigner*. But God remembered you in your low estate, and invited you to come into His

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A GOOD SOLDIER OF JESUS CHRIST. 209

kingdom. For a long time you hesitated. Like Felix, you were almost persuaded. Then, as in his case, other influences were exerted, and the struggle was prolonged; at last, however, it ended, you cried—

'Nay, but I yield, I yield,
I can hold out no more;
I sink, by dying love compelled,
And own Thee conqueror."

Christ at once received you; He enrolled you in His army, and you went forth wearing the ribbons of joy and gladness, pledged to fight against all His enemies to your lives' end.

Secondly, *You have become the property of your King.* "His ye are whom ye serve." Unless we surrender ourselves entirely to the Saviour, we may be *Methodists*, but we are not *Christians*. He searcheth the heart, and trieth the reins, and is never *deceived*.

Here thousands falter. We foolishly, ay, wickedly, hope that Christ will agree to a *compromise*. We offer Him everything except: wealth—business—friends—reputation! Our hope is vain. He says: "If any man come to Me, and hate not his father, mother, wife, children, brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple."

The true soldier does not hesitate. He cries—

'Take my soul, and body's powers,
Take my memory, mind, and will,
All my goods, and all my hours,
All I know; and all I feel,
All I think, and speak, and do;
Take my heart and make it new."

And he is accepted. Henceforth he feels that he is not his own. That he is bought with a price. That he lives; yet not he, but Christ lives in him.

At all times, in all places, in all company, he feels that he represents his King, and that, in some measure, His honour is entrusted to his keeping.

Thirdly, *You are PROVIDED for by the King.* The King takes the entire charge of you. Whatever you have of your own, is to be laid aside: old things are to pass away, and all things are to become new. You are to wear the King's clothes, eat the King's food, use the King's arms, and receive the King's pay.

Yes, so it is; our filthy garments are to be taken off; we are to go to the Royal Fountain and wash. We are to go to the Royal Wardrobe to be clothed. We are to go to the Royal Armoury for our equipment. We are to go to the Royal Banqueting House to be fed. We are to go to the Royal Treasury to be paid. Let us never forget this: Christ's soldiers have no reason for care about the future. The young lions may lack and suffer hunger, but *your* bread shall be given you, and *your* water shall be sure. He will pay you your wages.

Fourthly, *You must always wear your regimentals.* You cannot be a saint *to-day*, and a sinner *to-morrow*. You cannot be a saint on Sundays, and a sinner in the week. You cannot be a saint at church, and a sinner in the shop. You cannot be a saint in Liverpool, and a sinner in London. You cannot serve *God* and *Mammon*. You are a soldier *everywhere*, or *nowhere*, and woe to you if you dishonour your King.

Fifthly, *You must be prepared for trial and conflict.* Some of God's people seem to forget this. They think they are soldiers on *pay-days*, and at *reviews*; but as soon as the fiery darts begin to fall around them, and the road gets rough and rugged, they fancy they are deserters. A strange mistake this. You are never so much a soldier as when you are marching, or fighting. I fear the fault of this mistake lies very much with some of us, who may be called recruiting sergeants. In persuading men to enlist, we speak much more of the *ribbons*, the *bounty money*, and the *rewards*, than we do of the battlefield, and the march.

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Hence, perhaps, the error. But if *we* are to blame in this respect, our great King is not. The whole of His teaching is in the other direction. He tells us that we cannot follow Him without sacrifices. That we must be willing to lose everything, even life itself. That we must live a life of self-denial, and be prepared for hardness, and persecution, and death. That we shall have to strive, and wrestle, and fight, and that the enemies who are opposed to us, are so powerful, that at last we shall only scarcely be saved. ~~But~~ whatever mistakes we as ministers may make, He never deceives us. He puts all the difficulties fairly before us, and we are exhorted to count the cost, so that we may not be covered with shame at last.

Here, then, is a soldier of Christ. He is a man devoted to His service, whose business is to do His will, and live for His glory.

III.—*What is implied in being a GOOD soldier of Christ?*

I need not tell you that there are soldiers *and* soldiers. That there are some who are idle, and dissipated: a disgrace to the profession to which they belong. That there are others who only swell the numbers, and fill up the ranks, who look very well at reviews, but who don't count for much in the battlefield. And that there are others who are so true, and faithful, that they cover the army to which they belong with glory; whose very names have but to be uttered to stir the hearts of the soldiers, like the sound of a trumpet. These are the *good* soldiers.

What are the attributes of a good soldier? Let me name a few of the most prominent.

First, A good soldier is thoroughly *loyal*. He is not a *mercenary*, fighting for *pay*. He is proud of his uniform, he is proud of his name, and he is proud of his king. So it is with the good soldier of Christ. He cries, "Whom

have I in heaven but *Thee*? and there is none upon earth I desire besides *Thee*." It is his highest joy to say, "I serve the Lord Christ."

Secondly, A good soldier is *patriotic*. He not only loves his king, but his country. He is proud of his regimental flag, and still prouder of the Royal Standard. Every soldier is his *comrade*. He belongs to the army. Its defeat is his sorrow; its success is his joy. We all know what strength patriotism gives to the soldier. How, when the ranks have begun to waver, the cry, "What will they say in England?" has roused their fainting energies, and made heroes of them all.

So it is with the Christian soldier. He loves his *King* and he loves his *brethren*. He cries, "Pray for the peace of Jerusalem; they shall prosper that love thee: I will seek thy good."

Thirdly, The good soldier is *obedient*. This is indispensable. It was one of the most prominent characteristics of the Roman soldiers, as it is of our own. The centurion in the Gospels said, "I say to one, Go, and he goeth; to another, Come, and he cometh;" and we have read how, when at Pompeii the boiling lava swept through the doomed city, the sentinels perished at their posts. So it is still. The will of the monarch is the law of the good soldier's life. *His feelings* are never consulted. He may be at home in the midst of his family—a telegram comes; by the next train he leaves to join the army, perhaps to cross the seas, and perish in a distant land.

You remember the loss of the *Birkenhead* off the coast of Africa. How, when the vessel was sinking, the soldiers obeyed the word of their commander, and formed lines, and watched the women, and children, as they were carried to the shore, and then, as the vessel sank, they gave a shout of joy that the rest were saved, they themselves finding in the ocean, a coffin, and a grave. And you remember another

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occasion, when a similar tragedy was on the point of occurring, how Havelock, who was in command, marshalled his men on deck, and said, "Men, obey orders, and think of nothing else."

So it must be with us. It is one of the objects of the discipline we have to endure. Christ says, "If a man love Me, he will keep My words." It is enough that Jesus said it. The good soldier asks no questions—

"His not to make reply,
His not to reason why,
His but to do or die."

Fourthly, The good soldier is *earnest*. He is not a mere camp-follower. His heart is in his work. He is jealous for the honour of his king, and feels the importance of the conflict in which he is engaged. He therefore puts forth his every power, and shrinks from no toil, or sacrifice, to ensure success. So it must be with us. If we are not in earnest, we may as well give up. The enemies are so many, and the difficulties so great, that none but the earnest can hope to succeed. It is not one battle, and then rest. The attack will be renewed again and again. It is a war with *self*, as well as with the world, and the devil. Temper, pride, ambition, cowardice, indolence, covetousness, and a host of natural evils have to be overcome. This is no easy work. It will need much prayer, and great watchfulness. Hence, without earnestness, success is impossible.

Fifthly, The good soldier is *brave*. He is enlisted, not for pay, or to be admired, or applauded, but to do his duty. That duty must be done at all times, and under all circumstances. So it is with the Christian soldier. He is in an enemy's country, and the foes are many, subtle, fierce, and determined. They give no quarter. They never agree to an armistice. If he does not conquer them, they will conquer him. It is victory or death. The prize is not for him who evades the conflict, but for him that overcomes,

and without courage this is impossible. It is needed as much now as it was eighteen hundred years ago, as much here as at Jerusalem or Rome. Our foes may be less material, but they are more dangerous. They often wear the uniform of friends, and kiss ere they betray. We need courage, especially in the present day, to enable us to be real. There is a constant temptation to appear to be what we are not. To appear to be richer, wiser, better than we are. This is a temptation into which, if we are not brave, we shall be sure to fall. We see our neighbour living in a certain style, and we are at once tempted to do the same. The result of yielding will be weakness, and sin. Our resources will all be needed to meet our foolish extravagance, and we shall have nothing left for the service of God or the good of man. How well would it be if we were all to remember the notable saying of the late Mr. Brotherton: "A man's wealth depends not on the abundance of his possessions, but on the fewness of his wants"!

Courage is also required to do our duty to the poor, and the oppressed. To stand by them when every one else forsakes them, and to help them when you are despised and persecuted for doing it. To say, as the celebrated Thomas Garrett, of America, said when he was tried and heavily fined for concealing fugitive slaves, and his judge said he hoped it would be a warning to him to have nothing to do with runaway slaves for the future: "Friend, if thou knowest of any poor slave who is coming this way, and needs a friend, thou canst tell him I shall be ready to help him."

Courage is also required to enable us to be faithful to the rich, not to tolerate, much less to pander, to their vices. It is needed to enable us to stand against customs, and fashions, that our judgment condemns. To go against the stream, to deny oneself, to take up the cross. There is, I fear, a growing disposition amongst us to ignore all this. To refine away the strict demands of Christianity. To

make inclination, and not duty, the rule of our lives. Personal ease, and personal comfort, seem to be with many the great end of life. We are in danger of losing the martyr spirit, and Christian heroism, which once ennobled the followers of Christ. To strengthen our courage, and enable us to endure hardness, we must look at the invisible; we shall then, like the prophet's servant, see ourselves to be surrounded by chariots and horses of fire; we shall catch the loving smile of our great Commander, and we shall stand, and having done all, shall stand.

Sixthly, The good soldier is *patient*. The soldier is not enlisted for a day, but for life. He is often put where there is nothing to excite, or gratify ambition. There will be the long wearisome march, or the still more wearisome halt. While his comrades are assaulting cities, and winning victories, he has to stand and watch, or lie and suffer. The good soldier will do this. It is said that the French could charge with almost irresistible fury, but that they could not, like the British, form the squares, and, as the artillery opened pathways through, close up over their dead, as if at a review. It requires good soldiers to do this. So it is with suffering. They say that in the military hospitals a groan is rarely to be heard. So it must be with the good soldier of Christ. Ours is a long and wearying struggle. It assumes a thousand different forms, and we "have need of patience;" we must be ready to attack the foe, but we must also be prepared to stand, to suffer, and to die. We have an infallible Commander. He never makes a mistake. He ever leads His followers "in a right way."

"He nothing does, or suffers to be done,
But we should do ourselves, could we
But see the end of all events, as well as He."

He never loses a battle. Every day brings us nearer the end, and all will be well at last.

Seventhly, The good soldier is *self-denying*. Every act in

a soldier's life requires this. So it is with us. The self-indulgent can never be good Christians. Listen to the Commander: "If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me. Whosoever doth not bear his cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple." Self-denial is the opposite of self-gratification, and cross-bearing is the opposite of self-indulgence.

Eighthly, The good soldier is *modest*. His motto is, deeds not words. The braggart is never brave. The deepest river is the most silent. It is said that the word "glory" is not found in the despatches of the Duke of Wellington. He merely states what the army had done. So with the Christian, boasting is excluded. His constant language is, "By the grace of God I am what I am."

Let me now briefly show that all these characteristics were to be found in our departed friend, Mr. Mack.

Do we speak of *Loyalty*? Mr. Mack was eminently devout. Those of us who have heard him engage in prayer will not soon forget the depth of reverential love which was manifested. Everything connected with God was regarded as sacred, and treated accordingly.

Do we speak of *Patriotism*? He loved the Church. He lived for it, and I may almost say he died for it too. He counted no sacrifice, or work, too great, that was needed for the welfare of God's cause.

To be a Methodist was enough to ensure his sympathy and friendship. As to the ministers of the Church, they were welcomed to his home, and they lived in his heart. If ever a man deserved the name of the preacher's friend, it was Mr. Mack. He was always studying their comfort, and seeking to promote their happiness. Every preacher that has known him will feel that he has lost a personal friend.

Do we speak of *Obedience*? Duty was the law of Mr. Mack's life. He was cautious in adopting anything new, but show him that a thing was right, and you at once

secured his support. His own feelings never seemed to be taken into account. "It is right," was the answer to all opposing suggestions.

Do we speak of *Earnestness*? He was always in earnest. He seemed, as much as any man I have ever known, to be always about his "Father's business." He never waited to be urged to any work, but was always in the van, leading on his comrades. His persistence was almost irresistible. Whatever he undertook to do was sure to be done. The energy which enabled him to carry on so successfully the large business of which he was the head, was brought into the Church, and every department of the work of the Church felt the benefit of his association. He was always devising plans for aggression, and into those plans, when adopted, he threw, not only his wealth, but his personal labour, in a way that I have never seen equalled.

Do we speak of *Courage*? He never flinched from the post of duty. Nothing impressed me more with this feature of his character than the comparative willingness with which he consented to preside over public meetings. As a sailor he was a man of action rather than of words, yet, when applied to to take the chair at large and important gatherings, his natural modesty was not allowed to control him. His question was, "Do you think it my duty?" and, when that was answered to his satisfaction, he at once consented. So with becoming the chairman of the "Liverpool British Workman Company." He knew it to be a post of great responsibility, and involving public duties to which he had not been accustomed, but when his fellow-directors brought the argument of "duty" to bear upon him, he quietly bowed and said, "I will do my best," and right well he did it.

Do we speak of *Patience*? He seemed to have himself under perfect control. One of his most intimate business associates says that in the long years during which he

knew Mr. Mack, he never saw him in the least out of temper. Some of us have seen him in meetings, where he has been sorely tried ; not a hasty word, however, escaped his lips. He had, indeed, learned in patience to possess his soul.

Do we speak of *Self-denial* ? We all know that in his church-life self never seemed to enter into his calculations. God's cause was supreme in his estimation. To promote that, he denied himself to an extent that often made some of us remonstrate with him, though, alas ! in vain.

Do we speak of *Modesty* ? It was pre-eminent in his character. He never in any way referred to himself, or to his work. While the most diligent worker for the Church that I have ever known, a stranger might spend days with him without hearing a word that would imply that he had done anything. In all the years that I have known him I never heard him, either in private or public, make the slightest reference to his generous gifts, or to his arduous labours. The same feature in his character was seen in his religious associations, ever taking the lowest seat, and speaking in the most disparaging terms of his own attainments. He was in every respect worthy the name of a good soldier of Jesus Christ.

A stranger on reading these lines may be ready to think that, with the natural love of a long-standing friendship, this picture is coloured. My reply is, that I am speaking to his *friends*, to those who knew him even better than I did ; and I have no hesitation in saying that I am certain they will unite to testify that, so far from my having indulged in exaggeration, they could supply facts that would show that the picture is far inferior to the original. I fear I may sum up all by saying

“ He was a man, take him for all in all,
I shall not look upon his like again.”

He is, however, gone. Earth is poorer, but heaven has increased its wealth. The great King, whom he loved and

loyally served, has said, "Well done."—"He rests from his labours, and his works do follow him."

I would ask my hearers, What are you? Are you a *Rebel*? Oh, stop, and think of the result! Remember your defeat is certain. "Though hand join in hand, the wicked shall not go unpunished." "Let the potsherd of the earth strive with the potsherd of the earth, but woe to him that striveth with his Maker."

Are you a *Deserter*; one who has left his first love, and cast away his regimentals, and is wearing the livery of the devil? Oh, "remember from whence you have fallen, and repent, and do your first works"! Have you found a better friend than Jesus? Have you a sweeter peace, or better employment, or a brighter hope than in the days of yore? Remember, you cannot escape detection. The eyes of Him you have forsaken, and dishonoured, follow you everywhere. You must soon meet Him. What a meeting it will be! Your past privileges, and joys, and promises, will rise in judgment against you. Jesus, He whom you once loved, and served, will brand you with a curse, and you will be cast out into "shame and everlasting contempt." But stop, the end is not yet. God waiteth to be gracious. His message to you to-night is, "Return unto Me, and I will return unto you." "Though your sins be as crimson, they shall be white as snow." I beseech you not to reject the offer. But now, in the presence of this congregation, and in presence of the holy angels, say, "I will arise and go to my Father."

Are you a *Penitent*, writing bitter things against yourself, and longing to be enlisted in Christ's army? I say, "Come, for all things are now ready." Remember His promise, "Him that cometh unto Me, I will in no wise cast out." He is more anxious to save you, than you are to be saved; and if now you will rest your soul upon the sacrifice once offered for the sins of the world, you, even you, shall be admitted into the family of God.

Are you a *soldier of Christ*? Seek earnestly to be a "good soldier." Don't parley with the enemy. Don't give quarter to the foe. Take your right place, use the right weapons, and be faithful unto death.

To her, whose loss is heavier than that of all the rest of us, I will only say, Remember that God is the husband of the widow, and that He never takes a name without taking all the responsibilities which belong to that name. He will comfort, strengthen, and guide you here, and receive you to glory hereafter.

To the children I would say, Your father's name is a precious bequest. He has covered it with honour, see that you never disgrace it. It is said of a certain prince that he used to carry his father's portrait in his breast, and whenever tempted to do wrong, he would look at the portrait and say, "I must act as the son of such a father should act." So let it be with you. For his sake, as well as your own, avoid all that is evil, and cleave to that which is good: Follow him, as he followed Christ. Be good soldiers of the Lord Jesus Christ.

And now my work is done. We have gathered in this crowded congregation to do honour to one whom we have all admired, and loved. We now go out into the cold world to be tempted, and tried, as our sainted brother was. God grant we may be as faithful. We shall not all meet for worship again on earth. God grant we meet around God's throne in heaven.

"O that each in the day
Of His coming may say,
'I have fought my way through,

I have finished the work Thou didst give me to do!"

O that each from his Lord,
May receive the glad word,
'Well and faithfully done!

Enter into My joy, and sit down on My throne!"

XV.

*VALEDICTORY ADDRESS TO THE STUDENTS OF
THE WESTMINSTER AND SOUTHLANDS
COLLEGE, DELIVERED DECEMBER 19, 1882.*

SIR WILLIAM M'ARTHUR, K.G., C.B., M.P., IN THE CHAIR.

SIR WILLIAM, AND DEAR YOUNG FRIENDS,

SIR WILLIAM, allow me in my own name, and I am sure I may say in the name of the Methodist Connection, to congratulate you on the honour which Her Gracious Majesty has conferred upon you. It is an honour which you have richly merited. I pray that you may long be spared to enjoy it, and that at last you may exchange the honours of earth for the higher, and endless, honour of the skies. The work which now falls into my hands is one from which I have shrunk with a terror which you cannot imagine; I have shrunk from it, not because I am not interested in the work, but because I knew my own unfitness, and was anxious that some one better qualified than I am should have the opportunity, and the privilege, of talking to so many of those who must affect the destinies of our country. The Committee brought so much pressure to bear upon me that I yielded to it, partly because I have made up my mind that I would do my best to evade no duty belonging to the office I have the honour to hold. I yielded the more readily because of my love for children,

and my hearty sympathy for all young people; and if I can say a single word that will help our young friends in the solemn, and important work on which they are soon to enter, I shall be abundantly compensated for taking up the cross which I am now bearing. All of you, I suppose, are soon going home for Christmas, and you are anticipating the hearty welcome that awaits you, and the happy days which are opening before you. I pray that you may all have a safe journey, and that your highest hopes may be exceeded. In order to this you must make up your mind to make those around you happy. You will find in this, as in every other matter, that what a man soweth, that shall he also reap. Every man, it is said, is either a cloud, or a sunbeam; and if so, I urge you to be sunbeams. Rejoice in your youth; a morose, sulky, selfish young person, is a monstrosity; you were made to be happy, and you should live so that when you have passed to other scenes, the memory of your Christmas visit may be a bright and sunny spot in the hearts of all with whom you associate. I most heartily wish you all a merry Christmas, and a happy New Year. To some of you the joy of your departure will be tempered by the fact that you are not returning. Your college days are ended. Your education is not finished, and never will be, but your drilling is over, and now you go to the conflict, in which I trust you will all take a noble part. Your residence here must have exerted a great influence upon you, much greater than you imagine; and I trust that you can all say that you are nearer heaven, and more like God, than you were when you entered the College. To you who are leaving, I want especially to speak. I want to say a few words about your work, your way of doing it, and the results of your doing it well.

First, As to your work. It is of vital importance that you should have this clearly before you. If you do not, you will run uncertainly, and fight as one that beateth the

air. The Methodist people have, at a large expense, erected, furnished, and sustained these Colleges. They have given up some of their most able ministers to supervise your studies. They have taken you in the morning of life, and have given you an efficient training, and their object in all this is that they may do their part in raising up a generation of Christlike men and women. I trust their object is yours—that you have not taken the noble name of teacher merely to get a living, or that you may improve your social position, or that you may impart a certain amount of instruction to the scholars committed to your care, or even that you may induce a large number of them to become Methodists, but that your supreme object will be so to train the young people committed to your charge, that they may become good men and women, a generation to serve God. You may say, But surely if they become Methodists they will be this? I wish you were right in your supposition. But, alas! most of us know, to our sorrow, that it is not so. If I take up an apple, and find flaws here, and there, though I know it is an apple, I do not call it a good one. And so with many members of the Church. I do not doubt but that they are Christians, but those who are brought into contact with them, know that they are not good ones. They have grace, but they have not been properly trained in their youth. God has done great things for them, but man has done but little. The result is that, though they bear the name of Christ, they do not adorn His doctrine in all things. They have never learned the high art of self-control. They are passionate, proud, and contentious. This is very much the result of early neglect, and, while we mourn over their inconsistencies, we can but feel that they are as much to be pitied, as blamed. We look to you by God's help to give us a generation free from these defects. You will see from this that I do not, with many, confound instruction, and education, imparting, and developing. Many

parents, and even some members of School Committees, seem to regard children as so many empty phials, to be filled by the teacher with a certain amount of information, and if when examined they are found to contain a due quantity of grammar, arithmetic, and geography, they are content, though nothing has been done to develop the character, and fit the child for the position which he is destined to occupy in the near future. Beware that you never fall into this delusion. You must never forget that the children are moral agents, to be trained for God, and heaven. Do you say, Who is sufficient for a work so great as this? I reply, You are, if you go about your work in a right spirit, and in a right way.

Secondly, Let us see how your work is to be done. First, be yourselves what you wish your scholars to be. Your greatest difficulty will be here. Therefore I put it in the front, and if I had a voice of thunder I would cry in the ears of every teacher, Be yourselves what you wish your children to be. You will soon be free from restraint, and be in possession of that much coveted, but most dangerous thing, power. If you are not very watchful, and prayerful, that which was meant to secure your success, will ensure your defeat. Actions speak louder than words, and are far more influential than books. Depend upon it, the most powerful influence in your schools will be your own lives. Children understand, and feel, the power of your life long before they can understand your lessons. It will be of little use for you to warn them against pride, and anger, and cruelty, if you are proud, and angry, and cruel. It will be of little use for you to teach justice, truth, and self-denial, if you are unjust, untruthful, and selfish. It will be of little use for you to warn the children against vanity and frivolity, if you are vain and frivolous yourself. Whatever book is neglected, your life will be carefully studied by every child in the school. You will form *your* opinion of

them, and they will do the same with *you*. Children are quick discerners of character, and are rarely wrong in the estimate they form. I will undertake that every girl in your school will know the first morning the school opens whether you are a doll, or a teacher; and every boy will know whether you are a fop or a man. Besides, children are naturally copyists. At the beginning of life, they are merely plastic materials, to be moulded into vessels of honour, or dishonour by the hands of others. Habit becomes to all of us second nature, but these habits are formed we know not how. At first fine as the thread of gossamer, at last they become cables that no human hand can sever. This is put with great force by the prophet Jeremiah when he says, "Can the Ethiopian change his skin or the leopard his spots? Then may ye also do good that are accustomed to do evil." These habits are rarely the result of teaching or choice, but are mainly formed by the example, and indirect influence, of those around us. Your influence will be only second to that of the mother, and father. In many cases the example in the home from which the children come, will be of a most injurious character; hence the immense importance of your example, being ever of the right kind. The Apostle Paul saw the importance of this when writing to his young friends Timothy, and Titus. Over, and over again, he impresses upon them the necessity of watching over themselves, so that their lives might never contradict their teaching; and with all the power I possess I charge you, as Paul charged the Ephesian elders, "Take heed to *yourselves*" as well as to the flock. Be ever "living epistles" which your children may read to the glory of God.

Thirdly, If you wish to succeed as a Methodist teacher, take your right place in the Church with which you may be associated. Hoist your colours as soon as you arrive, and, having hoisted them, let neither men, nor devils, induce you to pull them down. Say like the brave old captain, when

summoned to surrender his ship by a powerful enemy, "I shall never strike my colours; I shall sail under them, or sink with them." You are going out not merely as teachers, but as Methodist teachers, and I want you to feel that the character of the Methodist day-school movement is in your hands. Your eloquent, and unconquerable Principal (Dr. Rigg) may write unanswerable articles in its defence, but men are governed far more by feeling, than by logic, and the estimate which our people will form of the movement will be influenced far more by your conduct than by his writings. The Methodist people have made great sacrifices in order to secure efficient Methodist teachers, and surely they have a right to expect that they will be produced. Their expectations may be unreasonable in some other respects, but they ought not to be disappointed in this. Everything is now being tested by results, and it will be the same with our educational machinery. Give us good, earnest Methodist teachers, and our people will stand by it to the end; but if we have teachers who are mere teachers, who stand apart from the Church, and regard it as merely an institution for their support, no eloquence of Dr. Rigg, and his friends, will be able to save it. What, then, you will ask, ought the supporters of the day schools to expect me to do? I answer, first join the Church—and do not be merely an honorary member. Select your Class, and having selected it, keep the class-night sacred. I know this will involve sacrifice, but you must do it for your own sake, and for the honour of Methodism. In the work of your school there will be much spiritual wear and tear, and if your soul is not carefully fed you will at last utter the terrible wail, "They made me a keeper of vineyards, but my own vineyard I have not kept."

Then be a worker in the Church. Do not be an ecclesiastical dummy. Do not make a fuss as to what you will do when you first arrive; be like the light, felt rather than heard.

And if you are what you should be, not one of you will be in your school twelve months, before the whole Church will feel your influence. If there is a need, join the Sunday school. I know you may tell me that you have so much teaching during the week that you would prefer a change; but duty, not pleasure, must be your guide, and the sacrifice you will make will bring a rich reward. You will find that your work in the Sunday school, will be of great service to you on the week-day, and the influence you have obtained in the day school, will greatly help you in your work on the Sabbath.

By all means take hold of the Band of Hope. This is God's great agent for saving the children from the curse under which so many millions have perished. The curse is everywhere, and the remedy should be everywhere. Your presence at the Band of Hope meetings will be of immense service. Your habits of order, and your sympathy with children, will enable you to make any Band of Hope a success; while your self-denial will be understood by the children, and appreciated by the population around. I advise every one of you to take the Blue Ribbon; and, if you have not done it already, it will be a great gratification to me to give it to you this morning; I provided myself with the material before I came.

There are other departments of Church-work which will be open to you, but I have dwelt especially upon the Sunday school, and Band of Hope, because they deal with children, and therefore are to a large extent a part of your work. You will find that religious teaching, and temperance, are indispensable if you are to raise up a generation of good men and women.

Fourthly, Do not seek office in the Church, but if in God's providence it comes to you, do not refuse it. It is a great power for good, and power for good should be welcomed by all. I would especially apply this remark to the office of

Class-leader. You, of all people, will make efficient Class-leaders. Your bright, quick intelligence will ensure your popularity with the young, and in this way your influence in the school will be consummated in the Church. By this time I fancy you will be ready to say, But you have said nothing about our work proper. I acknowledge that I have said nothing directly on the subject, but if you take my advice you will find indirectly I have said a great deal. You have now been for years under careful training, and have already had considerable experience in teaching. I will, therefore, not dwell upon that, but content myself with saying, Wherever you go, be sure and reverence the children committed to your care. They will often be wild and unlovable, and familiarity will tempt you to underestimate them; but guard against this. Remember they are all God's children, all made by Him, redeemed by Him, loved by Him, and that He who said, "Honour all men," is especially saying, "Honour the children." They are of priceless value.

"The sun is but a spark of fire,
A transient meteor in the sky;
The child, immortal as its Sire,
Can never die."

They must live for ever, either amidst the saved in heaven, or the lost in hell, and which it shall be will greatly depend on you. "Take heed, therefore, that you despise not one of these little ones." They may be dull, wayward, and ignorant, but there is no vessel on the sea, or palace on the land, that can be compared in value to the poorest, and worst child under your care. If, therefore, you would succeed in your work, ever look at the children in the light of revelation, and this will greatly help you in bearing with their waywardness, and ignorance, and in your efforts to make them all that their Heavenly Father designs them to be.

Lastly, Look a moment at the certain results of your

faithful work. First, you will have the comfort of a good conscience. Conscience will speak in these matters, and it is of immense importance to you that it should approve of your work. You will in the future be left pretty much alone with God, your conscience, and your children. If you please, you may neglect your work, or do it carelessly, but you will do so at your peril. Your three witnesses will not be gagged, and they will speak when you least wish to hear them,—at examinations, in the midnight hour, and on the judgment day. If, however, you have done your best, all will be well. You may not please your committee; you may not have done so well as some others; but if you have patiently, prayerfully, done your best, you will have the priceless comfort of the testimony of a good conscience and the smile of a loving God. Secondly, you will have the love of your children. It is a great thing to live in books, but it is greater to live in human hearts. The books will perish by and by, but the hearts will endure for ever. It has been well said that "The friendship of a child is the richest jewel set upon the circlet of society—a jewel worth a world of pains." This treasure you may secure, and, if you obtain it, no man will be able to take it from you. Do your duty, and in future years your name will be music in the ears of your scholars, and your memory enshrined in the holy temple of loving hearts. Thirdly, you will have the gratitude of the parents of your children. As the children grow up to be God-fearing men and women, carrying their parents' burden, and comforting their parents' hearts, they will bless the day when you were appointed to the school. Fourthly, you will have the esteem of the Church. Some people say they do not care what people think about them. Such people are either ignorant, or wicked. You must care. A good name is better than great riches, and as you fill the Church's ranks with godly men and women, she will crown you with her blessing, and when

you pass into eternity inscribe upon your tomb, as they did upon the tomb of a noble worker in by-gone days, "Sacred to the memory of Henry Thornton, who brought little children to Christ, that He might bless them." Fifthly, you will have the public approval and reward of God. You and your children must meet again at the great tribunal. Then there will be a review of your work, and as you stand amidst the scholars you have won for Christ, you will say with holy joy, "Here am I, and the children Thou gavest me." And He will say, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." We now part, not all to meet again till that day. God grant us grace that we may all be faithful!
Amen

"O that each in the day
Of His coming may say,
'I have fought my way through,

I have finished the work Thou didst give me to do!"

O that each from his Lord
May receive the glad word,
'Well and faithfully done!

Enter into My joy, and sit down on My throne."

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XVI

STOP THE GAP!¹

THAT Englishman must have a cold heart who can look at the present state of this country without emotions of the liveliest gratitude. Compare the last fifty years' history of other nations, with that of our own, and how wonderful is the contrast! While other lands have been the scene of bloodshed and strife, England, dwelling in peace, has gone amongst the nations like a magnet, drawing islands, and continents, to herself. And to-day, while the tempest is sweeping around other kingdoms, she sits Queen of the seas, with the light of a ceaseless morning shining on her flag. While, however, this thought produces joy, it should also produce deep anxiety. These privileges, and these acquisitions of territory, bring with them tremendous responsibilities. To whom much is given, of them much will be required. If England is to be the leader of the nations, if God has given us a great and solemn mission, it becomes our bounden duty to see that we are prepared for its accomplishment. If a man has a work to do which will require all his strength, he must be diligent in attending to his health, or in the hour of trial he will fail. If a vessel is going on a long and dangerous voyage with a rich cargo, care must be taken that her timbers be sound, and her crew

¹ An Address given in Exeter Hall, at a meeting of the Band of Hope Union. Samuel Morley, Esq., M.P., in the chair.

healthy. And so, if England is to be the leader and evangeliser of the nations, it becomes us to see that no internal evil is tolerated, and that she shall not only be a teacher, but a model too. I look on our own dear land not only with pride, but with a great deal of hope. I know there are evils amongst us, and their name is legion; but I also know that as soon as an evil is fairly seen, there is sure to spring up a band of men who, with a bold heart, and a determined hand, will set themselves to grapple with, and destroy it. And because I have faith in the ultimate triumph of all truth, and the certain destruction of all evil, I have no doubt of their success. Hence it is that I rejoice in the various organizations for meeting the wants of our population, and making our country what God designs it to be. I may name especially the Bible Societies, the Home Missionary Societies, the School Societies, the Temperance Societies, the United Kingdom Alliance, and the Band of Hope Union. All of them needed; all of them raised up to contend with a specific evil; all of them parts of God's great machinery for making England intelligent, healthy, and holy; and all of them the children of the present century, children that shall make their parent to be remembered with joy as long as the sun, and moon, endure. To-night, I wish to fix your attention especially on the Band of Hope Union, and to show you that it deserves the sympathy and support, not only of every Christian, but of every patriot.

There are in our land, this day, ten millions of young people. They are not to come, they are here; here, with their bright eyes, and merry voices, and loving hearts; here, holding in their hands not only the happiness of the various families to which they belong, but the character of this, and coming generations. They are here, with bodies to be clothed and fed; with minds to be trained and educated; with souls to be sanctified and saved; and, oh! to my eyes

there is no sight in the world so attractive, and so beautiful as these. Would that I could compel the eye of the Christian Church to rest upon them, till it fairly took in their immense importance! There is no subject that will bear a moment's comparison with the tremendously solemn question—What is our duty to these ten million children? God has given them into our hands, and we cannot escape from the responsibility, though we may neglect the duty. They are *our* children, whether we are single, or married; whether we have families, or none, they are *ours*. You may turn away from them and say—Am I my brother's keeper? but whom God has joined together no man can put asunder, and we are joined to them for better or worse. If we neglect them, and they grow up in ignorance, we shall have to support them in the workhouse; if they become criminal, we shall have to bear the expense of the police, and prison, and all the machinery of punishment. We may cast them off, but they will find us out sooner or later, in this world, or the next. Our happiness and honour are involved in our conduct to them: If we shut the door against them, and leave them to their fate, and they become ignorant, immoral, and vicious, they will brand us with a stigma which will never be erased. If, on the other hand, we throw every merely selfish thought to the winds, and, filled with the conviction of their grandeur and importance, devote all our energies to the work of making them what God designed them to be, they will throw around our name a halo of glory which will last for ever and ever. This, then, is our great question—What shall we do with our children? The day is rapidly coming when we must stand face to face with them before God. In His eyes, *indolence is sin*; and He will hold us responsible for doing all that we have the ability to do. I ask then, What, in that great and terrible day, shall we wish that we had done for them? We want them to be healthy, intelli-

gent, and-holy: can we do anything towards securing this? There is an answer from the throne of God; that answer every man should hear and believe. There is infidelity in the Church, as well as *out* of it. Many of God's declarations are often treated by us as if they were idle words. God speaks to us as a *nation*, as well as to us as *parents*, when He says, "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it." Whether this condemns us, or not, we are bound to believe it. Let God be true, and every man a liar. I say, then, to the Church of Christ, take hold of these ten millions at once; they are now soft, tender, plastic, mouldable; a tone will stir their young souls to the very depths, a look will affect them for ever. But a hardening process has commenced upon them, and if they are not seized at once, they will become harder than granite, or adamant, and then scalding tears, and the most earnest toils, will be all but useless. I rejoice to know that the Church, and nation, are waking up to this. Archbishop Whateley has said that the great work of the present generation is to take care of the young; and this conviction seems to have taken hold of all classes. Hence day schools are starting up in almost every village; there is a Sunday school connected with almost every church; and books are being written, sermons preached, classes formed, and efforts of every kind put forth, in order to preserve the children of our country from the grasp of the destroyer. And yet, are they becoming what we desire them to be? Alas! the answer is not doubtful. There are nearly half of them who never enter our schools, and thousands of them who live as if the Cross had never been erected, and die as if the Church had never been formed. Born in a Christian land, they are, as Charles Kingsley says, "damned from their birth;"—they go astray from the womb, speaking lies; and after living a short life of sin they die a death of misery, and pass out into a terrible

eternity. Had I time, I might show that drink is the great weight that has dragged them into this vortex; that the drinking habits of their parents are the principal reason why they are kept beyond our reach. These are rarely the children of abstainers. In almost every case drink has laid its black hand upon the parents, and the children seem only born to intensify the horror of the desolation it produces. Release the working men of this country from the drink demon, and their children will at once start up into morality and intelligence; and, suitable clothing having been obtained, the parents will rejoice to place their children in our schools, and to have them trained up to virtue and religion. But turning away from those who never enter our schools, I look at those who do come, and ask, Are these being regenerated and saved? Do they pass out of the Sunday school into the Church? Let each Sunday-school teacher carefully examine the records of his own school for the last ten years, and give us the result. Pass out of the school into the Church? Alas! there was an answer given to that question in this city twelve months ago, which ought to have stirred the Church from end to end. It was shown at the Conference of the Sunday-School Union that only one in ten of the scholars becomes a member of the visible Church! Teachers, is this what you contemplate in your self-sacrificing toil? Ministers, is this to be the end of your labour, and prayers, anxiety, and care? I appeal to the Church of Christ; can it be borne that nineteenth-century of our immortal, God-made, blood-bought children should pass out of our hands into those of the devil? Do we call into existence this immense, and expensive, machinery for this? Can we, dare we, be satisfied with rescuing but a tithe of our children from destruction? No; surely no! We see in each a lamb over whom the Good Shepherd is longing to rejoice. Our ambition is to present them all perfect in Christ. Our prayer is, that they may "all

salvation find, and not a soul be left behind." And can we bear the thought, that only one in ten of those for whom we have written, and preached, and prayed, and toiled, should leave the school members of the visible Church! The thought should fall upon our hearts like a spark from hell! Only one for Christ! Where then are the nine? With more than a mother's anxiety, that question should be asked by the Christian Church. Here is a young woman who is blessing God for the Sabbath school, and for the influence it exerted upon her, but where are her nine companions? Here is a young man rejoicing in the favour of God, but where are the nine lads who used to sit by his side? Some of them thoughtless and worldly; some of them, by and by, to have old memories revived, and stand as monuments of mercy; but others, alas! passing from the school, to vice, brutality, crime, and destruction. Where are the nine? You will find one in that poor creature, with wasted constitution, dying on a workhouse bed, and going to a pauper's grave. Where are the nine? You will find another in that brutal wretch, who, as his heart-broken wife tries to gather smiles on her face, and greet him with words of kindness, fells her to the earth, and with oaths and curses, kicks the trembling form he once swore to love and cherish. Where are they? There is one in that guilty creature who stands at the gin palace, lying in wait for the passers-by. Ay! shrink not back; vile as she now is, she was once a happy child in your school. You took her by the hand, you polished her by your intercourse,—you, by your kindness and care, rendered her more womanly, and beautiful, and sensitive; and there she is now, doing the devil's work, and earning the devil's wages. Where are they? There, in that poor girl hastening through your street, bent upon destruction. Her father loved her as I love my children; prayed for her as I pray for mine; and when she was born said—This same shall comfort me; and

now, sick of a world, which to her eyes seems filled with
foes, she leaps from the bridge—

"Mad from life's history,
Glad to death's mystery;
Swift to be hurled—

Anywhere—anywhere—out of the world!"

Where are the nine? In your prisons, in the lunatic
asylums, at the hulks, and swinging from the gallows! Yes, fellow-teachers, though you have to look at the scene
with aching hearts and tear-filled eyes, there are your
scholars. You cared for them, and toiled and prayed, and
yet the wolf of hell has dragged them to destruction. You
say, this is terrible! So it is; so terrible that my lips
quiver as I speak. And, oh, would to God that it were
not true! Would that it could be shown that we had only
lost the *one*, and had saved the *nine*! But, alas! however
we may differ as to the *cause*, there is a terrible agreement
as to the fact, that the majority of our scholars do not enter
the Church of Christ, and that thousands of them sink to the
lowest depths of vice and criminality. It is stated by the
Sabbath-School Teachers' League, that "out of ten thousand
three hundred and sixty-one inmates of prisons and peni-
tentiaries, six thousand five hundred and seventy-two had
previously received religious instruction in Sabbath schools!"
These returns are from various localities, showing that there
was no local cause to which this result might be attributed;
and this declaration is fully corroborated by subsequent
testimony. The late Mr. Clay, so many years chaplain of
the Preston House of Correction, says that sixty out of every
hundred prisoners put under his care had been Sunday-
school scholars. Well, but it may be said, that is in
Lancashire, where almost every child passes through the
Sabbath school. Let us, then, go to Northampton; and is it
better there? The Rev. T. Hutton, a most diligent and
intelligent gentleman, for some time chaplain to the North-

ampton gaol, says that one-half the prisoners committed to that place, had been Sabbath scholars five years, and upwards. Yes, it may be replied, Northampton has a large amount of vice, resulting from the habits of those engaged in the shoe trade, and that may have had an influence. I go then to my own county, Dorsetshire. There, there are no tall chimneys, no corrupting manufactures, but bold downs, and green fields, and beautiful hedge-rows, where Nature is always speaking for her God. And is that county an exception to this sad testimony? Alas! no. I find that out of one thousand and fifty-seven prisoners in Dorsetshire gaol, seven hundred and twenty-three have been scholars in your Sabbath schools! No; there is no *local* explanation possible. It is evident that there is a *universal* cause for this destruction; and that cause every Christian, ay, and every man deserving the name of patriot, is bound to do his best to discover, and, having discovered, to remove. This is the only course which wise men can pursue. To refuse to look at it, or to pass on with indifference, is madness.

Would not the shepherd be filled with anxiety, if every year his flock was thus thinned by some destroyer? Would not the farmer be startled, if only one-tenth of his seed came to perfection? and would he not set himself most carefully to seek a remedy? Is not the attention of the Lancashire manufacturers given to every scheme suggested for preventing a single fibre of their cotton from becoming waste? And shall we, who are entrusted with material of infinite value, be heedless of the terrible loss to which I have shown we are now subjected? No; surely, no. Our love to souls—our love to God—forbids it. Creatures for whom Christ died must not be lost, if there be any possibility of their salvation. When, some years ago, Admiral Hunter lost a vessel through endeavouring to save a sailor who had fallen overboard, he said at his court-martial, "Gentlemen, I consider that any one of my crew is of more value than

all the vessels in His Majesty's fleet;" and every true man will honour him for the declaration. And so I say, we had better, a thousand times, lose our flocks, our seed, our cotton, or anything, than lose our children; better have waste anywhere than in our Sabbath schools. I ask, then, as I look at these schools feeding our workhouses, and our prisons, Whence is this waste? Is there some law of heaven which compels it? If so, then let us sink down in mute submission, and say, I was dumb, I opened not my mouth, for Thou didst it. But is it so? No; thank God; no. The declaration of God is clear and full. "It is not the will of your Father in heaven that one of these little ones should perish." That is decisive; and at once the dark fear which had crept around us rolls away. God wills the salvation of every child, and, therefore, there is no insurmountable difficulty. *The cause is from beneath; it can be ascertained, and, by the blessing of God, removed.* Let us seek it. And where should we go for information, but to those who have suffered—to the few who are left to testify as to the cause of this ruin. I go to them; I ask the question, What dragged you down from purity, and intelligence, and honour, and plunged you into misery, and crime? And the answer comes with doleful uniformity—"Strong Drink." There may be other collateral causes. There is the natural depravity of the human heart; there is the influence of improper companions; there is the immense amount of trashy, or vicious, literature; and there is the evil example by which they are ever surrounded. But, judging from the testimony of the victims, from the declaration of those who have most carefully examined the subject, and who have had the best means of arriving at a correct opinion, and from my own somewhat extensive observation, I do not hesitate to say, that I believe strong drink is, directly or indirectly, the *principal* cause of the destruction over which we mourn. And now comes the question, Are we in any

measure to blame in this matter? and, if so, can we pursue a better plan in the future? I answer, Yes; we *are* to blame; we *may* do better. There must be something wrong in our training of these children, or they would not perish. I believe that every child, trained as God would have him be, will become a Christian, and get to heaven. Every one of us must believe this, for God has said it. Let us then endeavour to find out our error, for we must not go on as we have been going—training children to do the devil's work, and share the devil's doom. We must stop this terrible destruction. We have done much to save them; but it is clear that something has been left undone. What is it? I implore the attention of every Christian to this solemn question. You say, "Have we not built schools for them, and printed books, and preached sermons, and delivered lectures, and established all sorts of associations and organizations for their benefit?" I answer, You have. "Have we not warned them against the dangers to which they are exposed?" You have; and yet, though you have thus tried to shield them on every side against the destroyer, it is clear that your defences have been defective. There has been a gap left *somewhere*, and through that gap the wolf has entered, and out of that gap the poor lambs have been borne to destruction. Where is that gap? You have warned them against the wiles of the devil, against bad books, and companions; you have told them to be true, and brave, and honest; but you have *not* said—"IT IS NOT GOOD TO DRINK WINE, NOR ANYTHING WHEREBY THY BROTHER STUMBLETH, OR IS OFFENDED, OR IS MADE WEAK." There has been an adder lying on your hearthstone, which you have nursed and cherished. God warned you of its sting, and told you that its bite was fatal; but, because you had never felt it, you said that it was harmless, called it a good creature of God, laughed at those who warned you, placed it in your children's hands; and it has thrown its glossy coils around

them, and pierced them through with sorrows. Do you ask, What is to be done? Surely your own reason will give the reply. Remove the *cause* and the *effects* will cease. Do as you have been doing in other respects. Warn them against evil company, and improper books, and low pursuits! But, in addition to this, cry aloud to every one of them—“LOOK NOT UPON THE WINE WHEN IT IS RED, FOR AT LAST IT BITETH LIKE A SERPENT, AND STINGETH LIKE AN ADDER.” Let this be done; let us at least make the experiment. Let every parent, every minister, every Christian, every teacher, cease to regard this drink as a harmless luxury, to be associated with nuts, and almonds, and smiles, and joy; and treat it as a deceiver and a destroyer, and I believe that the gap will be stopped, the danger averted, and the children saved.

I appeal to my brethren in the ministry, to the Christian Church, to the noble host of Sabbath-school teachers, and to the fathers, and mothers, of this country, for their sympathy, and help, in this great work. Is not the danger which threatens our children great and imminent? Where can we find a family, in which these drinks are in common use, which has escaped unscathed? Have not thousands, whose morning was bright, and promising, had their sky darkened, and been hurried into an early grave by this evil? Do we not see on every hand Rachels weeping for the children strong drink has slain? and do we not hear many a Jacob crying, “Me hath it bereaved of my children; Joseph is not, Simeon is not, and now Benjamin is taken away”? And shall we tolerate, and smile upon, and defend, an enemy who does such work as this? Let us also remember that this destruction is not finished. That the scene is not like a battlefield, where the aching heart is relieved by the knowledge that the conflict is ended. No, now, while I am speaking, strong drink is rioting, and destroying, in our very midst, casting our sons to ruin, and dragging our daughters to shame. Drunkenness, like fire,

will quickly burn itself out if not supplied with fresh fuel. This we all know; and yet, though myriads have perished, we see the fire is nearly as vast, and terrible, as ever. Hence there must be daily supplies provided, and those supplies are England's sons and daughters. Ay! yonder, around the mouth of hell, I see a terrible sight; there are clustering myriads of immortal souls whom drink is hurrying to eternal woe. Yes, there they are, men, and women, harlots, and burglars—all brutal; blaspheming God, and cursing their own souls. They crowd each other down, sinking with a hell within, to a darker hell beyond; and yet, though they perish at the rate of at least fifty thousand in a year, the supplies are continued; and I see coming from our English homes those who shall fill their place, and follow in their steps. Still the public-house is filled; still, though the harlot lives but three years after entering on her course of sin, there is no decrease in the number of that unhappy band. Still the prison is crowded, the madhouse tenanted, and the rope of the gallows swings. On every breeze I hear the hoarse voice of the destroyer crying in his demoniac thirst for souls: "Wanted, wanted, wanted." Fathers, mothers, teachers, pastors, listen to that cry. Wanted! Wanted what? Our gold and silver? Our wealth and power? No; these he rejects with scorn, for the riches of the world, and the glory of them are already his! But wanted, our sons and daughters, to fill the place of the fifty thousand drunkards who are rushing this year over the dark precipice of ruin. Wanted! ten thousand fair girls, to fill the place of those now dying in misery, and shame. Wanted! twice ten thousand of your bright-eyed boys, to supply the madhouse, and the gaol! Wanted! ay, and mind you, unless we at once arise, and stand between them and ruin, they will be had! Listen, fathers, mothers, friends, to that dread cry: a cry ten thousand times more doleful than the olden cry, "Bring out your dead." This

is not a demand for the dead, but for the living! Look at the little band that clings around you. See how they shrink from the scene of terror, and cry to you, O mother, father, teacher, friend, "We are ignorant, we are weak. Lead us, lead us not into temptation." And will you? Teachers, I appeal to you; because you have proved your love to the little ones by making many sacrifices already. Parents, I appeal to you; because your hearts are bound up with these children's welfare. Christians, I appeal to you; because, like your great Master, you must love little children. Do not listen to the attempt of the destroyer to lull you into indifference. There is danger. There is danger of your children becoming the victims. They *may* escape, but *they may not*; and the brighter the child, the greater the danger. Look into their bright, and loving eyes, and tell me which of them can you spare? Think of the terrible meaning of the word "*drunkard*," a word so dark that poverty, sickness, and insanity are bright beside it. And when you have looked at it till you have arrived at a dim outline of its dread meaning, ask, "Is *any* sacrifice too great for me to make to preserve my child from this?" Do you ask, What is to be done? I answer, let every father, every mother, every minister, every Christian, every teacher, every patriot stand up and say, in the strength of God, "IF I CANNOT TAKE MY GLASS OF WINE, OR GLASS OF ALE, WITHOUT ENDANGERING MY CHILDREN'S SAFETY, I WILL DRINK NO MORE WHILE THE WORLD STANDETH."

Do I hear the objection rising, But this is not commanded in the Bible. I answer, Perhaps not positively, neither is there any positive command to avoid opium, or poisoned lozenges, or trashy novels, or theatres, or horse-racing; and yet you abstain from these. Remember, that where either of these has slain its thousands, drink has slain its tens of thousands. But, it may be said, the giving up of wine, and ale, will endanger my health. I answer, We have the

authority publicly given of two thousand of the most eminent physicians, that strong drink, as a beverage, is entirely unnecessary. And this conviction is rapidly spreading among intelligent men. The *Lancet*, the leading periodical of the medical profession, in summing up the present opinion of the medical world on this point, says, "Whereas the question used to be between much alcohol, and little, the question now is between a very little, and none at all. There is no medical man now, with a reputation to lose, who would venture an apology for the habitual use of more than a very little alcohol, and this in a very diluted form. Physiology has shown that the smallest quantity takes from the strength of the muscles, from the ability to endure extremes of temperature, from the clearness of the head, and the activity of the mind!" And this testimony is fully borne out by the experience of tens of thousands in this land, and millions in others. For my own part, I have now tried it for thirty years, and am perfectly satisfied that I am better, in every respect, without it, than with it. It is true, I have now and then to endure a little raillery, and even inconvenience; but I have had the pleasure of helping to make the drunkard's home happy, and his heart holy; and I believe that during that period, though my trumpet has never given an uncertain sound on this question, that I have never made an enemy, nor lost a friend. But suppose it should be of some benefit, are we not as Christians, ay, and as patriots, expected to make sacrifices for the good of others? Do we not give pensions and medals to those who risk their lives for their country's good? Do we not give the highest honour to the young missionary who hastens to some unhealthy land with the message of salvation? And is not drunkenness as bad as heathenism? And are not souls in England, as precious as those in Sierra Leone? Oh, let us go to the cross of Him who, though He was rich, for our sakes became poor; who

not only suffered, but laid down His life for us; and then, having caught His spirit, we shall spurn every selfish thought, and rejoice in the opportunity of treading in any degree in His steps! Let us, strengthened by the example of our great Master, take the balance, and put into one scale all the good that we ever imagined the drink to do, and then put into the other scale the health, the honour, the salvation, of our children, and we shall not hesitate a moment as to the course to be pursued. The tempting glass will at once be banished from our tables, and a Band of Hope be found in every school. Let this be done, and a marvellous change will soon spread across the land. Our schools will be filled, our churches and chapels crowded. The gap being stopped, and a complete defence thrown around our young people, they will be saved from the pestilential influences of those dens of iniquity which are open for their ruin, and the destruction will be stayed. "Then will our sons be as plants grown up in their youth, and our daughters become corner-stones, polished after the similitude of a palace;" and our own dear land become indeed—

"Great, glorious, and free;
First flower of the land, first gem of the sea!"

XVII.

OUR NATIONAL DRINK BILL FOR 1884, AND
WHAT WE HAVE FOR IT.

WE very often hear our public speakers use the words, "This England of ours," and it is an expression to which I am partial; we have a right to use it with grateful pride. England (and by England I mean the United Kingdom) is a wonderful country. Geographically it is a mere speck in the ocean, with a history reaching back only a few hundred years, and yet it is the home of liberty, science, and religion, while it has an empire which is almost boundless. We may well say—

" 'Tis a glorious charter, deny it who can,
That's found in the words, I'm an Englishman."

We have a right also to call this dear land "ours," for, by God's blessing, the English people have made it the glorious land it is. Our privileges have been won for us by our fathers, and have not been given us by a conqueror. They are our birthright, and are rendered doubly dear, by the toil, and blood, with which they were bought.

England is also "ours" because it is not the property of monarchs, peers, or legislators, but of all the people. We are units, not ciphers, and every individual exerts an influence upon the whole nation, for good, or evil. England will ever be what her people shall make her. If we become proud, selfish, and sensual, no power can preserve her from

¹ An Address given in Manchester and elsewhere.

ruin; while, on the other hand, if we are sober, intelligent, and godly, no power can prevent her from rising to a position of dignity, and glory, far superior to that which she now occupies. This is a question not left with the few, but the many. It is to be determined not by parliaments and courts, but by the people; and I want to impress upon your minds the solemn fact, that every one of us is every hour, of every day, affecting our native land either for weal or woe.

It follows from what I have said that all of us should know something of what is called political economy, and should endeavour to ascertain the sources of our national strength, and the causes of our national weakness. Our own interests, and the interests of our children, are so bound up with those of our country, that selfishness as well as patriotism should lead each of us to do our utmost to leave it the better for our having been in it. Nothing can be more foolish than to say, "I'll mind my own business, and leave the affairs of the nation to those who choose to attend to them." The affairs of the nation are your affairs, as much yours as anybody's, and you cannot neglect them without danger. If the price of food be artificially raised, you will have to pay a higher price for your loaf; there will be no exception made in your favour, because you didn't choose to do your duty. If trade be injured, your earnings will be materially diminished; and if our national wealth be improperly expended, and increased taxation results, we shall all feel the effect. We are a great family, we have a common interest, and we are bound to seek the common good. Others have laboured, and we have entered into their labours. Our fathers have, by God's blessing, raised the country from a state of barbarism, ignorance, and degradation, into one of intelligence, freedom, and happiness; and standing on such vantage ground, we shall ill deserve the name we bear, if we do not do our utmost to

remove every evil that may yet remain, and thus make our country, in a still higher sense,

"Great, glorious, and free,
First flower of the land, first gem of the sea."

The subject to which I now crave your attention, is one of the most important, affecting our every interest, and I ask your earnest, honest, intelligent attention. We may, and probably shall, differ in some of our views; but you will give me credit for believing what I say, and for having spared no pains in order to verify the statements which I shall place before you.

The subject which I am to bring before you is, "Our National Drink Bill for the year, and what we have for it;" or, in other words, I want you first to look at what we, as a nation, spend on strong drink, and then to inquire what are the results.

Let us, then, look first at the amount expended on these drinks. I have no doubt but that some of my hearers will be startled by some of the statements I shall make in this division of my subject, but they are derived from the Government returns, and the papers of eminent statisticians, read at the gatherings of Social Science, and other associations. They cannot, therefore, be accused of having a teetotal origin, or even a teetotal bias.

1. Let us see how much strong drink our people have consumed during a year. And in order that you may have the facts clearly and fairly before you, I will take the average consumption for the last ten years, thus allowing for the slight fluctuation caused by seasonal changes, such as good, or bad, trade. We have been declared by foreigners to be the most drunken nation under the sun. Let us see whether the facts afford any ground for the accusation.

The Board of Trade Returns show that the average yearly consumption, from 1874 to 1884, was—

15,893,867 gallons of Foreign Wine, to say nothing
of British Wines and Cider,
38,520,807 gallons of Home and Foreign Spirits,
1,021,630,618 gallons of Ale and Beer ;

being half a gallon of wine, more than a gallon of spirits, and nearly thirty gallons of ale and beer for every man, woman, and child in the United Kingdom ; or, as it has been declared by a statistical gentleman, enough to fill a canal three yards wide and two yards deep, from John o' Groat's to the Land's End in Cornwall !

2. Let us look at the quantity of grain consumed in the production of this immense quantity of liquor. We consumed last year 63 million bushels, or nearly 8 million quarters (to say nothing of grapes and apples employed for a similar purpose), and as each of us consumes for food about $5\frac{1}{2}$ bushels per year, this would have been enough to have fed 11 millions, or nearly one-third of our people. It is considerably more than the whole corn produce of Scotland. This grain would have been enough to have covered a road 1 yard deep and 4 yards wide, 540 miles long. It would have made 1,200,000,000 four-pound loaves—enough to have given 180 loaves to every family in the United Kingdom. And while we destroyed this immense quantity of corn to produce drink, we had to go to foreign parts and buy 50 millions' worth of corn to feed our people.

3. Look at the land required to produce all this corn, not including that employed for hop gardens, orchards, etc. This will be found to be at least 1,600,000 acres, or as much as the whole of Bedfordshire, Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, and Oxfordshire, and half a million more than the whole of the large and beautiful county of Somerset ! Imagine, then, that vast district covered with corn, given, as God gives us, for food for man and beast, and tell me, is it not a

serious thing that, though we have not bread enough to feed our people, we should gather the produce of that vast district, and, by the aid of the malthouse and still, convert it into what is at the best but a dangerous luxury?

4. Look at the houses employed in this traffic. These are about 180,000! a number easily named, but not so easily comprehended. To enable you understand what that number means, I may say that there are less than 110,000 houses in Manchester and Salford, and there are only about 60,000 in the borough of Leeds. At the last census there were only 146,211 in the whole of the counties of Bedford, Berks, Buckingham, Cambridge, Rutland, and Hereford. It is stated that the houses employed for the sale of strong drink in London alone, if placed side by side and a frontage of 12 yards allowed to each, would reach nearly 100 miles. And it is further said that if the whole of the public-houses and beershops in the land were put side by side, and the same frontage allowed them, they would form a street stretching from John o' Groat's to Land's End. These houses, we must bear in mind, are not little cottages in an out-of-the-way place, but large houses, in the very best situations, in every city, town, and village of the land. The corners of the streets, the centres of the market places, and the most desirable sites in the busiest thoroughfares are all selected for the public-house, and as the trade is so profitable that publicans can afford to pay a rent which no other tradesman can offer, competition is out of the question.

5. Let us look at the amount of money actually expended upon these drinks. What I have said will, to some extent, have prepared you to expect that the sum will be very large; and, indeed, it is so vast that the mind cannot grasp it. Mr. Porter, the eminent statistician, gave it as his opinion some years ago that our expenditure per year could not be less than 60 millions. During the malt-tax debate, Sir Fitzroy Kelly stated that, after careful

examination, he was satisfied that we spent, as a nation, 50 millions on malt liquors alone.

Since then Mr. William Hoyle has carefully examined the whole case by the light of the Government returns, and has shown that the average amount spent during the last ten years has been nearly 135 millions, or nearly £4, 10s. for every man, woman, and child in the kingdom, and nearly £20 for every family! In order to make you see a little more distinctly the vastness of this sum, I may remind you that the whole amount of the property and income tax last year was only £10,718,000; that our navy only cost £10,728,000; and our army, including the militia, volunteers, and ordnance, £15,910,000; both together amounting to but a little over £26,638,000, or in fact fifth of what we spent on drink! And the whole of our national expenditure, including the interest on the National Debt, the army, navy, and civil service, only amounts to £86,999,000, being 47 millions less than our drink bill!

We have in this country over 18,668 miles of railways, the working expenses of which only amounted to £37,368,000. The whole of our cotton trade only amounted to 90 millions, and all our mineral resources only yielded 88 millions, while we spent on drink 135 millions, or enough to pay the whole of the National Debt in five and a half years. And to stamp the immensity of the sum upon your minds, I may say that some patient and perservering gentleman has counted the chapters, verses, words, and letters in the Bible, and given us the following as the result:—There are, he says, in the Bible, 66 books, 1189 chapters, 31,173 verses, 773,692 words, and 3,567,180 letters. I have not tested the accuracy of these figures, but they have been received as correct by our religious periodicals, and we may therefore accept them without hesitation. With the money we spent on drink last year we could put

252 OUR NATIONAL DRINK BILL FOR 1884.

£2,045,454	of its	66 books.
£113,540	"	1189 chapters.
£4330	"	31,173 verses.
£174	"	773,692 words.
£38	"	3,567,180 letters.

Talk about the difficulty of providing a complete system of education for the children of our land! We have but to tithe our drink bill, or for one year to drink nine glasses, where, now we drink ten, and we shall have more than enough to meet our every want. Surely this is not too much to ask Christian England to do?

And, immense as these sums appear, they are only a part of the truth. For at least an equal amount is annually lost by the accidents, idleness, etc., occasioned by their use. When, then, we take in the whole case, we have a bill large enough to appal the most thoughtless; and we must all see that such a sum cannot be expended without producing *men's* results—results in which we are *all* deeply interested, and to these results I would now direct your attention. Of course, we all know that money *rightly expended* is not lost, or even *partially* lost. When the good housewife has expended her husband's earnings, she does not consider them *wasted*; she has something to show for her money. It has been invested for that which will minister in some way or other to the advantage of herself or family. If she has bought that which adds to their happiness, health, comfort, or intelligence, just in proportion as these ends are gained, her money has been well spent. She points to the comfortable "old arm chair," or to the well-spread table, or to the warm topcoat, that enables her husband to defy the rain, and the cold, or to the new dress in which her child goes to the Sunday school, and which makes her, in her eyes at least, the pride of the school she attends; and even to the doll which her little

girl is guarding with such maternal care, as a fair return for the money she has expended ; for it has contributed to the enjoyment and education of the family.

And so it should be with us as a nation. The money expended on cotton, on timber, on iron, on houses, ships, railways, pleasure gardens, pictures, music, books, clothes, food, and similar uses and pleasures is not lost. It is money well invested, and we may look at the result with pleasure. Is it so with the money expended on strong drink? Let us examine this point. It is very certain that if this large sum had been spent on any other article of trade, we should have had something to point to in which we might well rejoice. Is it so here? I will try and give you a brief but honest reply.

1. How has it affected the health of the people? For a long time the opinion prevailed that strong drink was an article of food, and that it was indispensable for health and strength. That opinion, like many others that were very old, has proved to be untrue, and is now exploded. All intelligent men, who have honestly examined the subject, have come to an opposite opinion. More than 1200 of the *élite* of our medical men have published a declaration that these drinks are "unnecessary as a beverage, and that those accustomed to take them may discontinue their use with perfect safety, and that entire abstinence from them would contribute to the health, prosperity, morality, and happiness of the human family."

Dr. Markham, when editor of the *British Medical Journal*, in summing up a discussion on alcohol, which had been carried on in the columns of that journal, said, "We are in conscience bound to say, that science has proved that alcohol is not food, and that being simply a stimulant to the nervous system, its use is hurtful to the body of a healthy man."

Dr. Edward Smith, in a work on diet, which has received

the sanction of the Queen, says in that book that, as an article of diet, "it is utterly useless."

Dr. C. E. Monk says, that in 99 cases out of every 100, where it is given as medicine, it is not only useless, but actually injurious.

Dr. Richardson says, "I have failed in all my experiments to discover the slightest good done to the body by the use of alcohol. It is unnatural, and always dangerous. That its continued use leaves no part of the body uninjured."

Dr. Andrew Clark says, that a healthy person cannot be benefited by the use of alcohol in any degree—nay, that in nine cases out of ten is injured by its use.

Sir W. Gull says, alcohol deadens the nervous system, and that even moderation spoils the health, and spoils the intellect.

Dr. K. Chambers says, "It seems to do nothing but harm. It is an arrester of nerve life, and is essentially a lessener of the power of the nervous system." In his Harveian Oration before the Royal College of Physicians, he says, "Our predecessors regarded alcohol as fuel to life's flame: we find it to be a damper to that flame."

The *Lancet* says that the controversy now is not between much alcohol, and little, but between little, and none.

These statements might be supported by a thousand others from men occupying the front ranks in the army of science.

There are many facts in daily life to prove their views correct. To one, or two, I venture to refer. The investigations, and experience, of the various Life Assurance Companies show that the life of an abstainer, other things being equal, is more valuable than that of a person who takes drink, however moderately. So well is this known, that several companies now keep a separate account for abstainers, in order that they may have the benefit of their abstinence, while in several of the most important offices, a publican.

would not be received on any terms. This is the case, I believe, with the General Assurance Office. When cool-headed business men risk their money on abstainers, at a lower rate than non-abstainers, and though eager for business refuse to insure a publican's life at any price, it is a powerful argument for total abstinence. In proof that their decision is well founded, the Registrar-General's Report shows that 138 publicans die to every 100 of 70 other trades, and Dr. Edmunds shows that 30 publicans die to every 15 of several trades. This shows that we are not the enemies of the publicans when we try to deliver them from such a dangerous business,—a business compared to which, even the occupation of a coal miner is safety. If we turn to the abstainers from these drinks, what do we find? Certainly that, as a body, they enjoy better health, can do more work, and live longer lives, than their drinking neighbours, and friends.

Some time since the *Morning Post*, in an article bearing on this subject, said with a sneer, that "Teetotalism did very well for amiable old gentlemen, but that it wouldn't do for strong men; that we had no heroes among us, but only inferior characters! that the Volunteer movement had exploded the notion that a man could be as strong without the use of drink as with it, or else the prizes that had been offered would have been won by abstainers." To this we might reply, that when abstainers have entered the force, they have been at least equal to their companions. And we all know that the Queen's Prize of £250 at Wimbledon has been won on several occasions by abstainers.

If, then, what I have said is true, that these drinks have done very little to strengthen us, have they done nothing to weaken, and destroy? It is clear they have. I go to the medical men, and they unite to declare that "a large portion of the disease that exists, is produced by them." As to the cases of sickness caused by their use, these are

numberless. Every medical man knows that it is the cause, directly or indirectly, of the majority of the cases to which they are called. Dr. M'Ghee, at the Social Science Congress at Belfast, said he was bound to say that four out of every five cases of disease, was caused by strong drink.

Mr. Neison, the eminent actuary, says that drink kills, directly, and indirectly, six persons every hour, or 52,500 every year! Mr. Wakley, the late coroner for West Middlesex, says that out of 1500 inquests held by him in one year, at least 900 were caused by drink! while of 690 inquests held in Liverpool, 589 were shown to have been directly, or indirectly, caused by the same agency! Here, then, we have a scene enough to appal the most stolid. Imagine that by some dread stroke of Providence the 40,000 inhabitants of Cambridge, and the 35,000 of Oxford, and the 21,000 of Canterbury, and the 13,000 of Cowes, and the 13,000 of Kendal were swept away, and that not a man, woman, or child escaped, what a thrill of horror would run through the land! and yet that would be less than the deaths caused by strong drink in Great Britain last year! Dr. Norman Kerr says, "A few years ago I instituted an inquiry to expose the falsity of the statement that 60,000 drunkards died every year in the United Kingdom. I had not long pursued my inquiry before it was made clear to me that there was very little exaggeration in the statement, and at the Social Science Congress I was compelled to admit that at least 120,000 annually lost their lives through alcoholic excess." While Dr. Richardson says that his opinion is, that nearly 200,000 lives are lost every year through the use of alcohol: that is, that *there is a funeral caused by drink every minute during the eight hours of public burial, from eight o'clock on the first of January, to four o'clock on the thirty-first of December!* Verily there are results from the vast population!

2. But some of our friends may say, If it hasn't pro-

moted our health as a nation, has it not added to our wealth? Are we not the richer for our expenditure? Let us look at that, for with some it is the strong point in their objections to the Temperance movement. It is said, See how many persons are employed. I admit there are a number of persons employed in the various maltings and breweries, but labour is our national capital, and ought to be employed in increasing the national wealth. The mere employment of servants does not increase my income, but diminishes it; for if they don't produce, they consume. Taking a shilling out of one pocket and putting it into another does not increase its value. The question with labour is how to employ it so as to have a return for the money when it is gone. It has been well said by Mr. Beggs:—

"It is a common notion that a community cannot be impoverished by an expenditure going on among themselves. This vague and absurd fallacy is the same thing as saying that waste is good for trade. Let us take an illustration. A ship, we will say, has gone to the bottom of the Atlantic, and as men have to be employed and wages paid in the construction of another ship to supply the place of that which was lost, the vulgar idea is that the loss is little or simply nothing. It is not taken into account that those who have to find the money to build the ship, have the amount it may have cost less to spend upon something else. Somebody is poorer to the extent of the value of the ship, and it is obvious that no individual loss can be a public benefit. A fire or a shipwreck is so much loss to the whole community. We must take the illustration a little farther. There is a wide difference, for example, between spending twenty shillings upon fireworks, and spending that amount upon an article of permanent utility. In both cases, it is true, an amount of human labour and skill has been expended upon the production of the articles,

but in the one case the fruit of the labour perishes with the gratification of a moment; in the other the article is an addition to the substantial wealth of its possessor. This has a direct application to the expenditure upon intoxicating drinks, and we will confine ourselves for the moment to the mere expenditure, and lose sight of the ulterior consequences; for if they contribute nothing to human happiness, nothing to the wealth of the State, it is so much money misapplied, so much wealth wasted. This is just as unprofitably spent as if expended upon fireworks. It is not intended to condemn displays of fireworks as occasional and holiday amusements, but simply to correct the impression that such displays make the community any the richer."

Labour bestowed upon other articles increases their value. The shoemaker buys his leather (which has previously been worked upon by the tanner) for four or five shillings, and then adds his labour, and the boots are worth from twelve to twenty-five shillings; so with the builder, the tailor, the watchmaker; everything that comes into their hands is increased in value by their labour, and thus they have repaid their country for their support, and that trade which finds most room for labour is the best friend to the working man. Hence the dread which workmen have of machines doing their work. Now, follow the corn from the farmer to the person who has just taken a glass of ale. There has been labour bestowed upon it certainly, but what has the country in return for that labour? You have a little stimulus and excitement, but as a nation we are not benefited. Hence Adam Smith, the great political economist, says, "All the labour expended on producing strong drink is utterly unproductive; it adds nothing to the wealth of the community."

And then, in its influence upon other trades, this trade is a thorough Ishmael. It is no friend to the labour market

in any way. If you go into a cotton or woollen mill, what a quantity of machinery you find. You see at once how it befriends other trades. And so you will find it everywhere, except you go into a malting or brewery; very little machinery is needed there; destruction is generally easy work. It has been computed that if you spend twenty shillings on any other article, from six to eighteen shillings go to the worker, but that if you spend it on drink, only one shilling will go to him. The following estimates have been supplied to me by a gentleman well qualified to form a correct opinion on the subject:—

If we spend 20s. on shoes			the workmen get 16s.		
"	"	blankets	"	"	14s.
"	"	tin utensils	"	"	16s.
"	"	broad cloth and woollens	"	"	14s.
"	"	ladies' dresses	"	"	15s.
"	"	cutlery	"	"	18s.
"	"	books	"	"	16s.
"	"	gentlemen's wearing apparel	"	"	15s.
"	"	strong drink	"	"	4d. to 6d.

Thus, if you spend £6 a year on books, clothes, etc., you give employment to a man for five weeks at 3s. a day; while if you spend the same sum on drink you have only given employment for one day at the same wages.

The *Scottishman's* newspaper says that the Caledonian Distillery, Edinburgh, does over £1,500,000 per annum, and only employs 150 men; at the same ratio, our cotton trade would employ only 5000 persons, whereas it does employ 482,903.

The late Ernest Jones said that trades unions are necessary to protect the working men against the influx of labourers from the agricultural districts. Let us expend our national income upon legitimate articles of trade, and they can all be employed—ay, and converted into good customers, able to buy clothes and furniture, which they can't do now.

If the money spent on drink employs in its manufacture 72,000 persons, the same amount spent on other articles would employ two millions and a half, giving each 20s. per week wages, or more than all the male working population of Manchester, Liverpool, Glasgow, Birmingham, Sheffield, Bradford, and Leeds put together! You would thus raise the value of labour immensely.

Talk, then, about emigration! there is no necessity for it whatever. Let us cease to consume the corn God sends us for food, in the production of strong drink, and no longer spend our money on that which, I repeat, is at the best but a dangerous luxury, and we shall have plenty of employment for all our people for the next thousand years, and at a rate of wages far higher than that with which we are now content; while, at the same time, our manufacturers will have a home market which all their machinery will not enable them to supply.

3. Has it added to the intelligence of the people? For if that has been the result it has not been wasted. Alas! here, as in the other respects I have named, we are "nothing better, but much the worse," for this expenditure.

First of all, it has put thousands of our people beyond the possibility of being educated. It has plunged them into the midnight darkness of insanity. It is notoriously one of the great predisposing causes to this terrible evil. Dr. Howe says, that out of 300 idiots, whose histories could be traced, 145 were the children of drunken parents. Dr. Ellis said, before a Parliamentary Committee, of 28 cases admitted into the Middlesex Asylum in one year, 19 were caused by drink.

Mr. Poynder, the clerk of the Bethlehem Asylum says, "At least half of the cases that came here arose from drink;" while Lord Shaftesbury said, in the Manchester Town Hall, "After acting as a Commissioner in Lunacy for the last twenty years, and as chairman of that Commission sixteen

years, and having made careful inquiries both here and in America, I am fully satisfied that fully six tenths of all the cases of insanity found in these realms arise from no other cause but intemperance."

Then there is the case of those who have the capability for education, and who yet remain untaught. The 10,000,000 of children in the country, given to us by God to be our national strength and glory, but who have become our national weakness and disgrace. Why were they not found in the schools till the State interfered and made education compulsory? Not because there were no schools to receive them; not because of the high price of education; but because, in the first place, a working man spending from £10 to £15 a year on drink will have hard work to find food for his family with the rest of his income; and next, as Mr. Goschen said the other day at Halifax, and as our Manchester Educational Aid Society has abundantly shown, the effect of the drink is so to degrade the mental tastes and perceptions, and so to steel the heart, that the education of the children is sacrificed to the sensual appetites of the parents. This is seen in the fact that nearly 22,000 children are in reformatories and industrial schools, and that there were 97,274 prosecutions last year under the Education Act. I question if one of these was against an abstainer. These are, as a rule, specially anxious for their children to have the benefit of education. How the drink hinders education was well shown by Mr. Mundella in a speech at Sheffield in 1873. He says, "There is a block of houses containing 1082 families, and 2153 children of school age. There are three schools in the block, two churches, three chapels, and forty-one public-houses. That means that every twenty-five of these wretched families have one public-house; and when you remember what it costs to support a public-house, you will have some idea of the cause of misery of the population."

4. How has the money affected our national morality? for if that is promoted the money has not been lost. The money spent on the moral elevation of the people is always well spent. The Americans, wherever they found a village or town, always begin with a church and a schoolhouse, and, as a matter of political economy, they act wisely. True religion always gives a people more than she gets.

In the first place, it has burdened us with many thousands of paupers; of this there can be no doubt. Mr. Mott, before the Poor Law Commissioners, said, "I have made pauperism my special study, and after careful examination I am convinced that nine-tenths of the cases are caused directly or indirectly by strong drink." Mr. C. Buxton, the eminent brewer, says that "but for intoxication, pauperism would be nearly extinguished in England." Dr. Chalmers says, "The public-house is the most abundant cause of pauperism in Scotland." While as to Ireland, that Cinderella of this sisterhood of nations, whose good we ought all to seek, in whose sorrows we all ought to sympathize, and for whose welfare we all ought to pray, strong drink is one of the most fruitful sources of her abject poverty. Poor as she is, she spent last year over £11,000,000 on strong drink, being nine times as much as was spent on the relief of her poor, and twenty times as much as she spent on the primary education of her children. So that the Irish people have but to raise the cry "No drink," instead of "No rent," in order to secure affluence and prosperity,

Not only has our drink-money resulted in a large increase in pauperism, but it is almost the parent of our immense army of criminals. The Government returns show that there were 273,560 persons committed to prison last year, and as but a small proportion of the criminal population are in detention at the same time, this will give us a startling view of the amount of criminality by which we are surrounded. Do we ask how, in the face of all the purifying and elevat-

ing influences which are at work amongst us, such a state of things can be? The unanimous answer of those best qualified to form an opinion on the subject is, that the great cause is strong drink. No one can speak more authoritatively or impartially on this subject than the judges, and there is a sad monotony in their testimony. Judge Bovill said, "Nine-tenths of the cases that have come before me have been caused by strong drink." Justice Lush, at the Manchester Assizes, said, "The drink again! It is so with almost every case that comes before me." Mr. Justice Grove said, "Men go into the public-house respectable, and come out felons." Baron Dowse said he found that drink was at the bottom of almost every crime committed in Dublin. Lord Chief-Justice Coleridge said that judges were weary with calling attention to drink as the principal cause of crime, but he could not refrain from saying that if they could make England sober they would shut up nine-tenths of the prisons. While the rest of the judges have again and again endorsed the declaration of Judge Patterson at Norwich, who, addressing the grand jury, said, "But for this drink you and I should have nothing to do."

The Licensed Victuallers of Birmingham, in a memorial to the Government, say, "It is abundantly proved that vice and drunkenness are in proportion to the number of public-houses!"

And Mr. C. Buxton, M.P., declares that "drink is the parent of crime, and that it is not too much to say that if all drinking of fermented liquors could be done away with, crime of every kind would fall to a fourth of its present amount, and the whole tone of moral feeling among the working-classes would be indefinitely raised."

Mr. Chamberlain says, "If I had an enchanter's wand and could destroy to-morrow the desire for strong drink in the people of England, what changes we should see! We should see our taxation reduced by millions sterling a year;

we should see our gaols and workhouses empty; we should see more lives saved in twelve months than are consumed in a century of bitter savage war. We should transfigure and transform the face of the whole country."

Mr. Gladstone says, "It has been said that greater calamities are inflicted on mankind by intemperance than by the three great historical scourges—war, pestilence, and famine. This is true for us, and it is the measure of our discredit and disgrace."

The *Times* says that "strong drink produces more idleness, crime, disease, want, and misery than all other causes put together;" while the *Daily Telegraph* says, "The entire trade is a covenant with sin and death."

I might add to these a host of other witnesses all supporting their testimony, but I refrain. I have shown you that our year's Drink Bill is an immense one, and that instead of producing health, intelligence, virtue, and happiness, it has produced ignorance, madness, misery, crime, and death. That, as the result of our year's expenditure, we have had trade crippled, our workhouses crowded, and the morals, intelligence, and health of the people seriously injured. That during the past year drink has plunged thousands of families into misery, turned thousands of people on the parish for others to support; converted thousands of our people into criminals; and hurried at least 80,000 of our fellow-countrymen into a drunkard's grave and a drunkard's eternity! And, alas! this destruction is not stayed. As I speak, hope is dying out of the hearts of thousands of the fathers, mothers, wives, and sisters of Great Britain, and a wail is heard, "How long, O God, how long?" To this sad cry the Christian Church could give an encouraging answer. She has but to catch the spirit and imitate the example of her Divine Master, who gave up even the glory of heaven to save her from sorrow and death, and a new era would begin.

U. Slater
Civil War

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When 60,000 of our cattle were smitten down, a day of fasting, humiliation, and prayer was appointed, and monarch, priests, and people besought the removal of the stroke. Here is a calamity infinitely more terrible, and yet priest and Levite have regarded it with a heedless eye. The Christian Church has been occupied with forms and ceremonies, jots and tittles, instead of standing with tear-filled eyes, and a breaking heart, between the living and the dead, that the plague may be stayed: Thank God, her eyes are opening, and multitudes from all the Churches are coming "to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty!" Let the rest follow their example, and this work of the devil will be destroyed.

Ain I asked for a remedy for this immense and terrible evil? I answer, "*Remove the cause and the effect will cease.*" This is the remedy, and there is no other. Every other remedy has been tried and has failed. We must either give up the drink, or go on in sin and sorrow. We are, as a nation, shut up to abstinence or intemperance. Our only remedy is total abstinence for the individual and prohibition for the State. It is clear to all that we cannot have the drink traffic amongst us, and at the same time be a sober country. For hundreds of years our wisest and best men have been trying to secure this, but have tried in vain. Our legislators have spent more time upon this trade than upon all the others put together. They have passed laws as to the strength of the drink that should be sold, as to the character of the persons that should sell it, as to the houses in which it should be sold, as to the very letters that should announce its sale. And after all their efforts, like the woman in the Gospels, "It is nothing better, but rather worse." Well, then, should we allow our legislators to waste their time in a vain attempt to make a curse a blessing? Humanity is too precious for useless experiments. We cannot stand by and see God insulted, our

country dishonoured, our homes desolated, and our sons and daughters destroyed. The new Reform Bill has given us the power to deal with the evil. Let us use that power. The drink sellers have avowed their determination to know no political party, but to vote in the interest of their trade, that their rallying cry shall be "Self-protection." Let us follow their example, and may God defend the right!

I appeal especially to the new electors. The laws of the country will henceforth, to a large extent, be what you make them. You have the power to rescue the Sabbath day from the grasp of the publican, and to say, "We will not have the Sabbath broken by Act of Parliament." Nay, you have the power to say whether the drink curse shall continue to be a national institution or not. You can save your country from this gigantic curse. Its continuance, or destruction, is in your hands. The responsibility for its existence will henceforth rest on you. Realize, therefore, the power you possess, and act accordingly. Resolve at all costs that you will have a sober land. Let us go to the polling booth, not to vote for a party, but for God, and for our country, and our home. Let us rise to the solemnity of the occasion, and seeing the immensity of the interests involved, resolve that, as a people, we will no longer tamper with, or sanction, or shelter, the direst enemy that ever assailed the human family. The stumbling-block being removed, the gospel will have free course, and be glorified. The wilderness will soon blossom as the rose; hope will take the place of despair; want, and poverty, and ignorance, and crime will flee as clouds before the noonday sun, and England, dear old England, be indeed a sober, a happy, and a Christian land.

XVIII.

THE RELATIONSHIP OF THE SUNDAY SCHOOL TO THE BAND OF HOPE.

THE Executive of the Sunday-School Union has invited me to bring the subject of Temperance before this Convention, and, though overworked, I could not refuse the invitation. My difficulty has been how best to bring it before you so as to ensure practical and permanent results. Knowing, as I rejoice to do, that the majority of the Sunday-school teachers in this land are abstainers, and that the rest are rapidly coming to the same decision, I felt that it was scarcely necessary for me to speak to the individual. I therefore determined to say a few words about that which seems to me to be the next question in importance, that is, the relationship of the Sunday-school organization to the Band of Hope. I do this the more readily because I belong to both, and am anxious for the prosperity of each. I became a Sunday-school teacher when in my teens, and believe it to be the most important organization connected with the Christian Church. I also became an abstainer about the same time, and after forty years' experience, I rejoice to testify that it has been a blessing to me beyond all price.

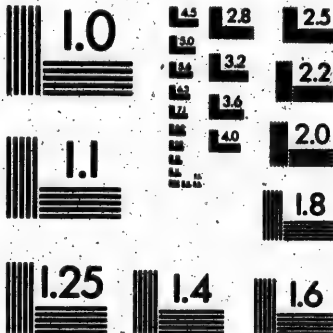
What, then, is the relationship that should exist between the Sunday school, and the Band of Hope? Shall they be

An Address given at a meeting of the Sunday-School Union held in the
City Temple.



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antagonistic, or neutral, or amalgamated? This is a question of immense importance, for they are two mighty and influential organizations. I suppose I shall not be far wrong if I say that the Sunday school has five million scholars, with 700,000 teachers; while there are 10,000 Bands of Hope, with two million members. Every one will see that the relationship of these great organizations is a matter in which not only every Christian, but every patriot, is deeply interested. Their antagonism would be an immense calamity. Their neutrality would be an injury to both; while their amalgamation would benefit each, and make them an immense blessing to both the Church and the world. Believing this, I am most anxious that every Sunday-school teacher should believe it also. I want, therefore, to give a few reasons for my belief, and I pray you look at them without prejudice, and in the fear of God.

For what object does the Sunday school exist? Not merely to keep children out of mischief, and to give employment to teachers who can find no other way of spending the Sunday. Not that we may have great organizations, and large collections, and agreeable tea meetings, but that we may gather the young people around us, and, by God's blessing, make them good citizens, and devout, intelligent, and earnest Christians. This is the object that every right-minded teacher sets before him, and for this he lives, and labours, and prays. Whatever is accomplished, if this is not done, the school is a failure; and whatever is not done, if this is accomplished, the school is a success. Thank God, in innumerable cases this has been accomplished, and the devoted teacher has been able to say with holy joy, as he has looked at many on earth, and others in heaven "For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at His coming? For ye are our glory and our joy." But what

TO THE BAND OF HOPE.

of many others? Alas! their history may be written in tears and blood. Let any teacher examine the register of his school twenty or thirty years ago, and then carefully inquire after the history of the names recorded there, and if he writes the record, it will be like the prophet's roll written within and without with mourning, lamentation, and woe. Some will be found to be "walking in the counsel of the ungodly," others "standing in the way of sinners," others "sitting in the seat of the scorner," some in the betting-ring, some outcasts, some in prison, some transported, and some gone to an early and unhonoured grave. In their case the teacher has laboured in vain, and has spent his strength for naught. If he is a wise man, will he not endeavour to ascertain the cause of this destruction? And if a sensible, right-hearted teacher, will he not be prepared for any sacrifice and toil if, by God's grace, he may preserve the children still in the school from falling victims to the same destroyer? If so, I think there will be no hesitation as to the decision of this meeting, and of the teachers whom you represent. I know there are many evil agencies in operation to promote this destruction, but there are a host of witnesses to testify that the giant evil is strong drink. This assists and intensifies all the other agencies, and at the same time exerts an influence peculiarly its own. I will not quote instances, for they are innumerable. I should insult you if I were thus to hint that you doubted that which is patent to all. The great question for you is, Will the incorporation of total abstinence with the Sunday school lessen this destruction, and make it more efficient for its great work?

As to children taking intoxicating drinks, the medical world unites in testifying that for young people, at least, they are not only unnecessary, but absolutely injurious. That, as Sir William Gull says, "They spoil their health, and injure their intellect," and it is also equally certain that

it is fearfully injurious to their moral nature. Years ago an aged and eminent man remarked: "If there is a particle of depravity in a man's heart a glass of brandy will find it out and stir it up." And what is true of brandy is true of alcohol in every shape. From the time of Noah till this day its effects have shown that it has an affinity for the worst part of our nature. Hence we cannot be too careful in guarding young people against it, and as Sunday-school teachers are especially devoted to the instruction and training of young people, the Band of Hope movement has a special claim upon their sympathy and co-operation. Leaving, therefore, the question of the danger of children taking intoxicating drink, I want to show you the great advantage which will result from the Sunday school and Band of Hope being incorporated—from the Band of Hope being not a mere accidental appendage, depending for its very existence upon some one outside of the school, but its becoming an integral part of the Sunday-school organization, as completely so as the missionary society or library.

RESULTS OF THE UNION.

Let me name a few results of this union. First, it will be an immense benefit to the Band of Hope movement. This movement has made wonderful progress in spite of the apathy of some and the hostility of others. In many cases the Band of Hope has existed outside the school, and too often outside the Church. It has been an orphan, uncared for and untrained. The natural result of this has been that it has sometimes said and done things that it never would have said and done if it had been more kindly treated. This, however, has been its misfortune rather than its fault. With all its defects and faults it is a fine healthy child, and if the Sunday school will but adopt it, and give it its place among the children, its faults will soon be cured, and its

defects remedied; placed in such a beautiful home, its strength will be fully developed, it will throw its protecting arm around the children, and our country soon become as sober as she is free.

Look also at the many benefits which this union will confer on the Sunday schools. These seem to me to be so many and so great that I can barely name a few of them. First, it will infuse new vigour into the work of the school. Without this there is necessarily a great deal that is monotonous, a great deal that taxes the patience of the children, and a great deal that is confined to the Sunday. Now we all know that children are naturally active. They must be doing, and if they haven't something good to do they will be doing evil. The children's poet says that "Satan finds some mischief still for idle hands to do." With all respect to the writer, I think Satan might spare his pains, for the children will find it for themselves. It is, therefore, our wisdom to keep them from the temptation, and employ them in something useful and good. This is no easy task, for they get through their work so rapidly that they will tax all our ingenuity to keep them employed. Many teachers forget this, and coerce the school into a state of order that destroys its efficiency, while other teachers whose physical force is not so well developed, and who are not such martinets, allow the school to degenerate into a Babel. It is in a chronic state of disorder, and the happiest moment of the superintendent and teachers is when the school closes, especially if it closes without a storm. All this arises from ignoring, or endeavouring to repress, the God-given activity of the children. Set them to work, and especially set them to work on something which they cannot understand, and in which they are interested, and all this discord and confusion will speedily be remedied. A Temperance organization in the school will provide just what is needed. The teachers and scholars will soon be united in the sympathy which arises from

being engaged in a common work. They will soon begin to understand and appreciate each other more highly. It will provide work for all; and give each the work for which he is best fitted. There will be meetings to be arranged for, songs to be sung, recitations to be given, absentees to seek, adherents to gain. Thus every one will be actively employed, and each will have the joyous consciousness that he is not living in vain, but that he is taking his part in the noble work of delivering his country from its greatest foes. Besides this, the school would not be content with merely holding meetings, but, as is the case in all well-managed Bands of Hope, would organize a literature department, the scholars being encouraged to attempt the sale of books and periodicals. These, being obtained at wholesale prices, will leave a good margin of profit, and the whole amount made by each scholar being given to him in some useful form at the end of the year, will form a powerful stimulus to industry. The books thus earned will form the nucleus of a good library, a library that may be of immense value both to them and those with whom they are associated. This is not a mere theory. I know of one Wesleyan Band of Hope in a poor neighbourhood, that sells as many as forty thousand books, and periodicals, per annum. The value of such a work as this is beyond computation. For not only is a vast amount of pure literature spread where it is greatly needed, but right habits are formed by the little tradespeople, and the whole school is strengthened by the result. Such an arrangement as this in every school, would soon turn the whole army of Sunday-school scholars into home missionaries, and colporteurs, and would exert a mighty purifying and educating influence upon the population of the country.

While the external influence of the union would be so great, the internal effect would be still greater. First, it would shelter the scholars from the danger of falling victims

to intemperance. Every child would go out into life knowing that there was danger, and protected against it. They would also strengthen each other in their resolution to abstain, and the strong thus infusing some of their strength into the weak, would ensure a consistency on the part of the scholars which would be almost irresistible, while the public opinion in the school would more than counteract the opposition met with without.

It would also preserve them from forming bad companionships; young people who like the glass will not want to associate with staunch abstainers, and thus those who abstain will escape a fearful peril.

It would also do much to develop the moral courage of the scholars. It is a most humiliating fact that a vast number of people are very defective in this respect, especially so in matters pertaining to morality and religion. They are governed by feeling, policy, convenience, ease, or worldly interest, rather than by principle. They are creatures of circumstances, and can never say "Yes" or "No" on the real merits of a question. Their views depend on their company; they always "*Think so too*;" they neither row nor steer, but drift, and are at the mercy of every wind that blows. Now total abstinence, intelligently and heartily adopted by the children in our schools, will do much to remedy this state of things. It will teach them to judge, discriminate, decide, and act upon their decision. It will teach them to say "Yes" and "No" intelligently and consistently, and the ability to do this will be a greater boon to a child than the gift of £1000. It may seem a little thing for a boy or girl to say "No" when asked to take a glass of wine, but it is not so. That word, thus bravely spoken, will have a mighty influence upon the future character and history of the child. The having said "No" in the face of example and custom, and against strong pressure from some of those whom they esteem and love,

will do much to enable them to say "No" to other temptations, and under other circumstances. It will be the first step in a path that leads to glory and honour. It is to the child a battle, which, ending in victory, will nerve him for future conflicts and future victories; and will do much towards placing him at last amongst those who, having overcome, shall inherit all things.

THE ELDER SCHOLARS.

This union will also do much towards enabling the school to retain its elder scholars. At present, a large number of those who are ending their teens think it beneath them to attend the Sunday school, but let them be identified with a great patriotic movement, and their enthusiasm will intensify as their intelligence increases; and feeling that the school is their headquarters in the great struggle, they will prize it beyond measure, and abide by it to the end. Those who have not yet decided for Christ will find this neutral ground, where they can be fully and usefully employed, and their services heartily recognised. They will thus be kept connected with the school and the Church, and the association will in numbers of instances lead to their full consecration to Christ and His work.

Thus all the wealth of the school will be laid under contribution; education, taste, musical ability, gifts of speech, faculty for organization, power of persuasion, will all be needed and employed, and gifts will be developed, the very existence of which would otherwise have been unknown.

THE CHURCH.

Lastly, this union would immensely help the Church in the performance of her aggressive work. At present a gulf yawns between the Church and the multitude; gather-

ings of its wisest and best members are being held to discuss the question, "How to reach the masses?" If the Sunday school will heartily adopt the Band of Hope, this perplexing problem will soon be solved. It will throw a bridge across the gulf, over which the Church can reach the people with her message of love and mercy, and across which they can come for light and salvation. The vast hosts of young people, filled with enthusiasm about meetings in which they are to take part, will be human advertisements seen and heard of all men, and under their influence the sympathy and curiosity of the parents will be excited, and their attendance secured at these meetings. After a few visits these prejudices will be removed, old memories awakened, and influence exerted, that will ultimately lead many of them to the Saviour. I know that this union will not be accomplished without a good deal of self-sacrifice, but the object contemplated is so immense, so important, and so pressing, that I think it ought to be attempted at once. Let the Sunday-school workers fully understand the fearful peril to which their children are exposed through the drinking habits of the country, and I am sure they will put aside habit and prejudice, and make any sacrifice to preserve them from ruin. There are but two paths open to the children, one the broad, winding, indefinite path of moderation, the path by which every drunkard reached the way of darkness and despair; and the other the plain, safe path of total abstinence, the path which leads to health, virtue, and religion. The Sunday-school teachers are the spiritual guides of the children under their care. By their labours and sacrifices they have won their confidence and love, they have access to millions of those that the Temperance organizations do not reach. These children, having faith in their wisdom and love, are asking them which path they shall take. They must give an answer. They cannot be neutral. If their voice is silent, their conduct will reply.

276 *SUNDAY SCHOOL AND BAND OF HOPE.*

Surely, surely you will not hesitate as to what that reply shall be! Think of their value, think of their peril, think of the multitudes who have perished, think of the numbers whose feet are even now standing in slippery places, and looking to God for guidance and strength, take their young hands in yours, and leading them in the Band of Hope, say, "This is the way, walk ye in it."

XIX.

TEMPERANCE ADDRESS IN CORNWALL.

I CONGRATULATE you, Mr. Chairman, on presiding over such a magnificent gathering as the present. I look upon it that this is one of the signs of the times, and a very clear proof that the Temperance movement is not retrograding. And I would ask anybody—why should it? Is the evil with which we battle diminishing? Are there less terrible effects resulting from drink than there used to be? We have but to look at the scenes of vice and misery around us—at the criminal returns and the police reports—and the revenue returns—and you must be perfectly satisfied that the great bulk of the people still continue to partake enormously of intoxicating drink. Well, if this be so, then it is evident that our work is not finished, and that we must gird up our loins for what is, perhaps, to be a long and arduous struggle. We must go forward. We can no more go back than the magnificent eagle can go back into the egg from which it came. The thing is utterly impossible. The total abstinence movement is as thoroughly the work of God as Methodism—and when God works who shall hinder Him? When God calls any organization into existence, it will continue to live until its work is done. God is no foolish builder. He does not begin to build unless He is able to finish. There will be more seen in the future than there has been in the past. What you see now is only the first ripple of the advancing

tide. But the waves will grow stronger and stronger, until by and by they shall sweep away the drinking system for ever and ever. Our business is to help on that day. Mr. Bass is exceedingly anxious that the people of this country should have right views of the evils, the terrible evils, resulting from the present mode of managing our railway affairs. He says he believes that we don't know how many persons are injured and killed thereby; and that it is so terrible a thing to think of the aggregate amount of injured and killed by our railways, that the people of the country cannot be awake to it, or they would insist on a remedy. That is what Mr. Bass thinks. So he is determined that things shall be set right, and he has appointed a commissioner of his own; to inspect the Lancashire and Yorkshire line, and to report upon it. As I happen to use that railway pretty often, I heartily wish him success in remedying the evil. But there is another trade which Mr. Bass knows a little about, and we believe that the people of this country need no special commissioner to tell them that the evils resulting from that trade are immensely more terrible than any railway disasters, sad as these are. Our business is to arouse the people of this country, by putting before them grave facts, by pressing them home on their consciences, and by giving them arguments which shall lead to vigorous and determined action. Our work is hard, but it is not quite so hard as at the beginning: others have laboured, and we have entered into their labours. We must bring our arguments, state our facts, restate them, and fight our battles over again, and we shall have to do all this unitedly and repeatedly, because there are difficulties in the way which we cannot over-estimate. Some time ago one of our number met a member of the Society of Friends—a Society which has so many estimable men and women—and talked to him on the Temperance question. He brought his facts and arguments to bear on the Quaker's mind, and the

Friend listened with the calmness and courtesy which so distinguish his brethren. To each fact and argument he assented with "yea," "yea," "yea;" and then, when the good teetotaller had exhausted his stock of arguments, the old gentleman said, "Friend, I see the full force of thy arguments, and thou hast but to prove one thing more, and I am with thee." "What is that?" eagerly asked the abstainer. "Well," said the Quaker, "thou hast only to prove that I don't like the drink, and I am with thee." Thousands say the same thing, as many of you in effect are now saying it to me—"You have proved that drink does a great deal of harm; that many people would be benefited by giving it up entirely; that it often ruins the soul as well as the body; but then—I like it!" But for that you would be with us, henceforth and for ever. My dear friends, there is more in that than at first meets the ear. I believe in my heart that if strong drink were only as nasty as salts, and senna, thousands of people, who cannot now see the force of our arguments, would then see them directly. This is our great difficulty. We have to contend with appetite, with habit, with custom, with immense interests, and all these things range themselves between men and the light, and they remain in darkness. It is our duty to remove these obstacles, and to let the light shine, even on those who may be unwilling to receive it. What, then, are we aiming at? I answer unhesitatingly—we are aiming at a sober world. I want you to see where we are. I need not say to anybody who knows me that I never willingly deal in clap-trap, and that I do not knowingly throw dust in the eyes of any man. A man won by a lie, is not worth having; he will not be kept if gained, and, probably, would not be worth the keeping. If I am wrong, come and show it, and I'll admit the error; if right, then, in the name of truth, and of the God of truth, come on our side. The Temperance movement rests on two great facts, and I am exceedingly

anxious that our friends should just take these two facts, and look at them honestly before high heaven. First, Intemperance is an immense, and terrible evil. Is it so? I want to know how far we go together. I want you to go all the way with me; I shall be thankful if you can go all the way, but, if not, why half a loaf is better than no bread, Is it a fact—I ask you Christian men—that Intemperance is a great and terrible evil? I don't want you just to admit this. It is easy to admit: it is sometimes more difficult to show that you are convinced. Admission is often the idle man's refuge, I want faith. Is it so? If it be such an immense and terrible evil, what becomes of the sneers with which we are sometimes greeted? There is a kind of good-tempered chaff which we have occasionally to encounter. They say, "This teetotalism of yours is a bit of a hobby; it pleases you, and does not hurt us; if you can do a bit of good, God bless you; you're a decent sort of chap; it's all quite right;" and so on. Now I want you to see farther into this question than that—I want you to see that this evil affects the well-being of England—that it is not a wart, but a cancer—that it is sapping the strength of the nation, and that, if it be not checked, it will eat out the national vigour, and drag us down from our place among the nations. Look for an instant at the nature of this evil. I think some of our friends do not understand it. It is easy to pronounce the word "drunkenness;" but who can fathom it? There are some words the meaning of which no dictionary can convey, and no words can, I am very sure, convey the full meaning and import of this word. There are some things which you and I can only understand by being brought face to face with them; and this is one of them. Do you see what I mean? Take the word "toothache." You may read the most learned treatise on the teeth, written by the most talented and experienced dentist, and, when you have done,

you will not have half as clear a notion of the matter as if you had a genuine attack of that "hell of all diseases." Some things you cannot learn from books; experience will be the best teacher. And so we hear people talking glibly about drunkenness—until their own son has fallen, or their daughter's fair fame is tarnished, and then they bow their heads in sorrow, and curse the drink, and all that belongs thereto. Some of us teetotallers are accused of saying strong things; but the iron has entered into our souls—our tears have fallen like rain, our hearts are well-nigh broken. I heard the other day a young man say strong things; and he felt that he was doing it, and said so; but, said he, "I have a right to do it, for it killed my father!" When you hear a man or a woman speaking strongly, ask whether they have not suffered from the evil. If you have been in the school of experience you will soon know that there are ills arising from the vice of drunkenness which no words can describe. To my ministerial friends, then, I say in all candour that I wish them to understand that we don't profess to be better than they; we only profess to know more than they do on one particular point. There are men among my ministerial brethren whose shoe latchet I am not worthy to unloose. But, I earnestly ask them, is there any other evil equal to this? Let us look at a few of the evils with which we contend—take falsehood, take blasphemy, take dishonesty. Now, my brethren, as intelligent men, I will make you the jury. Are these evils to be put by the side of drunkenness? I think not. Take dishonesty—how it minifies by the side of drunkenness. Dishonesty only touches one part of the man's nature, and does not necessarily affect the others. The thief may preserve a well-balanced mind, and a good physical constitution. A dishonest man may be a good father, and his children have a good education, perhaps better than some honest men's. But what part of a man does drunkenness leave

alone? It touches every part of his nature. The Liverpool stipendiary magistrate, Mr. Aspinall, says, "We shall never do anything as we ought for putting down drunkenness until we teach everybody that it is a sin, and a crime." You must not cover it up with smooth words, such as "three sheets in the wind," "a drop too much," "a little overtaken." Don't you see that all these are so many self-deceptions? God does not talk about it in that way. He says, "No drunkard shall enter the kingdom of heaven." Look at the poor wretches—tottering along, trembling, paralysed!—their reason dethroned; their consciences seared: until the man sinks lower than the beasts, and allows his children to perish, or imbrues his hands with the life-blood of her whom he has sworn to protect and cherish! It is only seen in all its heinousness and magnitude by the eye of the Omniscient One. It touches all interests. I scarcely know which to dwell on first. Take Commerce, and see how drunkenness affects that. 150 millions of our money are turned into this channel—say one half of it spent in drunkenness, and other half in moderation. You have here 75 millions spent in drunkenness. Is not that a national calamity? Are we not all interested in it? Can we spend our money in two things? The boy who buys a top for a penny cannot spend his penny in marbles; the man who buys a hat for 15s. cannot buy a 15s. pair of shoes with the same money. But do the men who buy hats and shoes stand on an equal ground with those who buy alcoholic drink? Not a bit of it. He who spends 15s. in drink wants more, and yet "more!" Is that so with the other articles? Does a man buy a pair of boots, and get into a state of incessant unrest until he obtains another pair? Does any wife go to her neighbour with a care-worn, anxious, tearful face, and say, "Oh, my poor husband is on the spree—buying boots and shoes!" Does the other woman say, "Just like my man

—off all the week buying bonnets and caps for the children. Oh, what shall we do!" To be sure not; the money spent in these articles does not create an appetite until everything else is forgotten, as does this one of drink. You'll find, as I have already intimated, all the legitimate trades are a kind of holy brotherhood; the success of one is the success of the others. The trade in drink is a kind of Ishmael; its hand is against every man, and every man's hand ought to be against it. Brethren, do you believe this? I want you to see it. You go and buy a hat, and you'll soon find that there is something else wanted. The coat that was old, but looked as if it would last a little longer, seems rather white about the seams. You try not to perceive it. You say to yourself that you don't want another coat just yet; but still that hat says, as plainly and continuously as a new hat can say anything, "Go to the tailor!" It is so persistent that at last you exclaim, "I really do think that I want a new Sunday coat," and you buy it. Then the trousers are not just the thing. So the hat led to the coat, and the trousers. Does not that show how all trades are linked together? A man had a sofa presented to him, that he might rest a little when his day's work was done. It was new and handsome. His wife, after admiring the lovely sofa, thought the carpet looked wondrously shabby. Husband said the carpet was all right; it did very well before. Wife—one of the gentle sort, who knew the power of snowflakes falling one by one—said nothing more for a bit, but soon returned to the charge. "The carpet really is much worn, and such an old-fashioned pattern; the sofa would look ever so much better with a new carpet." Nobody could deny that, and thus the carpet was had. But then the wall paper was altogether out of harmony, monstrously so; and this reflected on the taste of both parties. Neither wished to be suspected of bad taste, and so the paper was ordered.

The result of the sofa was new furniture for the whole room. Thus all legitimate trades are linked together, and are friends and not enemies. A man going into a grocer's shop is not made a bad customer for other trades, but a man going into the drink-shop is made a bad customer for everybody. So here is commerce injured, and I want to see this drink done away with because it is your enemy as well as mine. See also how this affects society itself. It turns citizens into criminals; the taxpayer into the tax-receiver. It is said that a drunkard is nobody's enemy but his own. Yes he is. He is the nation's enemy. He ought to be one of the pillars to bear the national burden, but he becomes a weight for others to bear. I was at the Liverpool Police Court very recently, on a Monday, and saw that excellent and Christian magistrate, Mr. Aspinall, adjudicate on 140 cases of drunkenness. The offenders were from 91 years of age to 13. One was a little boy whose head just came above the dock, and whose father, a respectable man, was weeping like a child. A husband was fined 5s. and costs, and looking round the court with glaring eyes, he said, "Where's my missus?" "Ah," said Mr. Aspinall, "that is the way: you spend your wife's money week after week, the money which should be hers to keep the house open and the children fed, you get drunk, and then look out for your ill-used 'missus.' If you had not good wives, I don't know what would become of many of you." A woman, 40 years of age, was placed in the dock. "How many times have you been here?" "Sixty-six, sir!" Then there was a young girl of 16. "Oh, Agnes," said the kind magistrate, "you here again—you, who should be the joy of some home, again in this plight?" Agnes bent her face in her hands. "How many times?" "Thirteen, sir." "Oh, Agnes, what can I do to reclaim you? Character gone, home lost, I can do no better for you than to send you to gaol for three months." Ah,

indeed, what can we do! Here they come, one after the other, a sad procession of Saturday and Sunday inebriates. Have I not proved to you that this drinking system is one of the most terrible curses that afflicts humanity! I must point for a moment or two at the influence which it exercises upon the family. The family circle should be the type of heaven: let drunkenness come in, and it becomes the type of hell. What does it do? Go and ask the father whose hoary head it has brought down in sorrow to the grave. Go and ask the mother as she weeps over the coffin of one who was to have been her earthly solace and stay. Ask the husband whose life's hopes are blasted. Ask the wife whose all is lying in the dust. Ask the desolate and outcast little children there. "I hate the drink," said a young man recently; "I hate and curse it every day." "Why?" "I'll tell you why. When I was a little boy my father took my jacket off my back, and my very shoes off my feet; he left me without a particle of clothing, and went and pawned the things and spent the money. I had no education. I soon had no home. I was flung out into the world. And I hate the drink from my very heart!" So do I. Don't you? Yes, a thousand times, yes. Christian brethren,—if we could gather on some vast plain the myriads who have been cursed by drink, not the victims only but those who suffer through and with them, what should we behold? The brightest jewels of our Churches and our families, the teachers and the taught of our Sunday schools, the manliest of our men, the tenderest of our women, husband and wife, brother and sister, parents and children—ten thousand thousand sufferers by strong drink! If I could I would make the Christian Church walk in procession right through the serried ranks, that their hearts might be wrung by the tears and cries of anguish. The Church herself is too often bereaved by strong drink. God's heritage, redeemed with the precious blood of Christ, is diminished. Think of

the awful fact that 20,000 people are lost to the Christian Church every year through drink! Think of it! Twenty thousand people. What does that number mean? More than all the Methodists of Cornwall. If some fell disease should attack our members, and lay low every Methodist in Cornwall! Would not Conference take the alarm? Would they not hasten to stand between the living and the dead, that the plague might be stayed? If we had a love-feast (but it would be a sorrow-feast), and my brethren would stand up and tell all they know about the doings of drink, the Lamentations of Jeremiah would be almost a joyous song by the side of the agony described. Think of those who have fallen. As I speak, name after name recurs to my memory—devout and honoured ministers, men of profound learning, popular lecturers, young men full of hope and of promise, who have fallen! One of the good things for which I bless my sainted mother, was her teaching me to pray for the ministers in our Circuit every morning and night by name. I always did it. As a child I had my favourite ministers, and, when the new ones came, some of those who left were omitted. There were others, however, whom I never forgot. There was one whose name I cannot mention, but he will be ever linked with my earliest memories. His farewell sermon! I shall never forget it. I can see him now bidding farewell to those to whom he had ministered so faithfully—his last affectionate adieus are in my ears! I never omitted to pray for him. But I lived to mourn the day when his name was omitted from our *Minutes* through strong drink. Who is safe—where is the man that uses strong drink who dares stand up and say he is absolutely secure? Is your body stronger than theirs? Is your brain clearer than theirs? Is your piety deeper than theirs? Alas, no! Let him, therefore, that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall. My second fact is, that total abstinence is the only complete

remedy for this evil. I rejoice to know that there have been men saved from this vice by other means. But the only complete remedy for intemperance is total abstinence. Do you believe it? In the name of my Master I put it to you—Have you any other remedy? If you have, bring it out, and let us look at it. If you can show me a more effectual remedy, I'll fling mine to the winds, and adopt yours to-night. All I want is a sober world, by the best means. But I am not going to get out of my strong and tested boat to embark in your paper one, when the storm is abroad, and the rocks are near. I must be sure before I leave this good old craft, that I gain a better and a safer one by the change. I went down to see your beautiful "Richard Lewis," and I read the record of the crews she had saved—bless her and all her live-saving crew! Bring out your remedial "Richard Lewis" to-night, and show your rescued men. We bring out our lifeboat; we are not ashamed of her; we have the names of the men she has saved—oh, for an angel's tongue, then would I give them! those names are everywhere—wherever the Temperance lifeboat has been launched, there are rescued men and women. Do you ask where they are to be found? I answer in the building societies, at the polling-booth, in class meetings, at quarterly meetings, in the pulpit, and passing through the gates into the city a cloud of witnesses they stand—our lifeboat brought them from the wreck and placed them at the feet of Jesus, and now they are eternally rejoicing with their Saviour. One stormy night last winter there was a ring at my door. Presently the servant came. A gentleman wanted to see me. He was one of the finest men I ever looked on; he was over six feet high, his hair as white as snow. He said, "Do you remember me?" After a moment's thought I said, "Yes; I saw you when I preached at such a chapel." He said, "Yes; and as you shook me by the hand you said, 'I hope we shall meet in

heaven.' I am come," said he, "to tell you we never shall! I have been a member of a Christian church for many years, and teacher of the select class in the Sunday school, but drink has mastered me; I am filling all around me with shame and sorrow, and I have resolved this night to end it; but, somehow, I felt I could not go till I had seen you." I at once proceeded to reason with him. We bent our knees in prayer; divine help was given; and strong in God's strength he signed the pledge; and soon afterwards I saw him bowing at the sacramental table, and as we parted he said, "Thank God, you were a teetotaller; you have saved a soul from death." Did not that give me greater joy than wine ever can give? You young men who knelt before us to-day as you dedicated soul and body to the work of the Church, what say you to that? Oh, to save a soul from death is a joy infinitely superior to the pleasure of a glass of wine! Young brothers—Do you think that as long as you live anybody will thank God that you take strong drink? Never. Will anybody ever thank God that you take a glass of wine now and then? Never. Come into our Temperance lifeboat. Join us at once and for ever. There is a great work yet to be done. If you render gallant service, unending and rich beyond compare will be your recompense. Let us reach the wreck and take the endangered ones off, and the blessing of heaven and earth shall be our reward.

XX.

ADDRESS AT THE ŒCUMENICAL CONFERENCE OF THE METHODIST CHURCH.

THE subject allotted to me is "Juvenile Temperance Organizations, and their Promotion through the Sunday School, and Church," and I venture to think that no subject, of greater importance, will come before this Conference. The future of both the Church, and the world, depends upon the character, and conduct, of the young. If they grow up sober, intelligent, and Christian, the millennial glory will soon be here. If they become intemperate, sensual, and sinful, there is nothing before us but ages of sorrow, and shame. We may well, then, gather from all lands, and with prayerful earnestness ask, What can we do to ensure the well-being of our children?

It is a terrible fact that myriads of our young people have perished through strong drink, and that multitudes of others are in imminent danger. Intemperance is the giant evil of our land. Its victims are on every hand, and its blighting shadow rests almost on every home. This is not a mere theory, but a hideous fact, the evidence of which is written in tears and blood. Our greatest brewer (Mr Buxton) has declared it to be "the worst of plagues," and our greatest statesman (Mr Gladstone) has said that "its results are more terrible than those of war, pestilence, and famine combined."

This evil, juvenile temperance organizations are designed to grapple with and destroy. They, like most other of our

great social movements, are children of the nineteenth century, but they have already accomplished such glorious results, that I am warranted in saying that they are destined to assist in making this century memorable till time shall be no more.

These organizations are founded upon what appears to me to be the wisest, and soundest principles. They deal with the young, knowing that if the young are rightly trained, the manhood of the future will be safe. They say that drunkenness is caused exclusively by the use of intoxicating drinks, being unknown where these drinks are unknown, and existing wherever they are used, cursing the rich man's palace as well as the poor man's cot, and dragging down the child of the Christian, as readily as the child of the outcast; that science has declared them to be not only unnecessary for the young, but most injurious to them. They therefore go to the root of the matter, and require every member to pledge himself to total abstinence, knowing that the child who keeps that pledge may be a thousand other things, but can never be a drunkard.

These organizations have already made rapid progress amongst us, and have done a great work. There are in Great Britain at least ten thousand, with two million members, and I trust we shall hear to-day that in other lands their progress has been still more rapid, and the results still more gratifying.

The question before us is, What can the Sunday school, and the Church, do to promote these organizations? This question I wish briefly to answer. And, as the time is so limited, I shall have to content myself with giving a few suggestions, with scarcely a word of explanation or illustration. First, the School—and when I speak of the school I speak of the Church, for the school is now practically the juvenile part of the Church. The School should adopt the temperance organization, and make it, not a mere accidental appendage, as it has been hitherto, but an essential, integral part of her organization. It should no longer be left to the

mercy of any passer-by who may have the courage to take hold of it, but should be nourished and cherished by the school as part of herself. She should organize, support, and work the whole machinery, and take the entire responsibility upon herself. Then, and only then, will the work be properly done.

To facilitate this, it will be well for each school to elect a temperance secretary, as it does a missionary secretary or librarian, and it should be his duty to take the oversight of the temperance department of the school work. In this way the abstaining scholars will be recognised, encouraged, and guided, and class by class the whole school be ultimately enrolled in the temperance ranks.

Addresses on the subject should be given quarterly; and, as with missions, a special sermon be preached every year.

Temperance should also find its full place in the periodicals of the school, and everything be done to impress upon the scholars the fact that temperance must be the rule of their life.

I know that this will be a great step to take,—far greater than our friends from America imagine,—but it is a step imperatively demanded by the condition of things around us, and the beneficial results of which will be so great that, once taken, it will never again be retraced.

Let me name a few of these results. First, it will be of incalculable value to the temperance organizations themselves. Hitherto the Church has been too much like some fashionable mothers, so busy with her own adornments and gratifications, that she has left her children to the care of servants, contenting herself with a passing word of approval on special occasions. So this temperance child has been left pretty much to itself, and, as a consequence, it has said and done things that have grieved its best friends, things it never would have said and done if its mother had performed her duty. Now we know that God has said, "A child left to himself bringeth his *mother* to shame." The shame.

therefore, of this belongs to the mother, and not to the child. It has been its misfortune, not its fault. Let the mother understand that her child has rights as well as duties. Let her set to work to do her duty, instead of talking about her rights; the evils will then soon be remedied, and the child enter upon an era of happiness and prosperity. Next, look at the benefits which the Church will derive from such a course. These, I rejoice to say, are so many, that I should require the whole of the twenty minutes allotted to me even to name them. I will therefore content myself with mentioning one or two; a host of others will, I am sure, present themselves to every one that takes the trouble to look at the matter.

First, it would infuse new vigour into the school itself. Nothing benefits young people so much as setting them to work. "Satan finds some mischief still for idle hands to do." And many of our schools are a sad illustration of this truth. From want of work, a kind of mental dyspepsia has set in, and they are in a chronic state of irritability and discontent. Set them to work, and all this will be speedily remedied, and a temperance organization will provide them with just what they need. The temperance scholars will then be united in the sympathy which arises from their being actively engaged in a common work. They will begin to understand and appreciate each other more highly. It will provide work for every one, and give every one his work. There will be meetings to be arranged for, songs to be sung, petitions to be given, absentees to seek, adherents to gain. Thus every one will be actively employed, and each will have the joyous consciousness that he is not living in vain.

Second, it would do much to retain the elder scholars. At present, a large number who are ending their teens think it beneath them to sit in classes, and be taught; but let them be identified with this great work, and their enthusiasm in its support will intensify as their intelligence increases. Those who are not yet converted, can thus be

most usefully employed, and heartily recognised, and, as they watch the progress of their work, they will be strengthened with the stimulus of conscious victory. All the latent wealth of the school will also be laid under contribution. Music, education, taste, gift of speech, faculty for organization, power of persuasion, will all be enlisted, and gifts be developed, the very existence of which would otherwise be unknown.

Third, it would immensely help the Church in the performance of her aggressive work. At present a gulf yawns between the Church, and the multitude. Gatherings of the wisest, and the best, members of the Church, have been called, to study the question of "How to reach the masses?" This perplexing problem is solved at once by the temperance movement. It throws a bridge across the gulf, over which the Church can go to the people, with her message of love, and mercy, and over which thousands of them are already flocking to her for light, and salvation. The vast hosts of young people, full of enthusiasm about meetings in which they are to take a part, will be human advertisements, seen and heard of all men, and under their influence the sympathy and curiosity of the parents will be excited, and thousands of them will attend, who would never come to hear a sermon, and, coming to the temperance meeting, prejudice will be removed, old memories be awakened, and an influence exerted, which will ultimately lead many of them to the Saviour.

Besides this, the school would not be content with merely holding meetings, but would do, as is done in all well-managed temperance societies, organize a literature department, the scholars being encouraged to attempt the sale of books and periodicals. These being obtained at wholesale prices, will leave a good margin for profit; the account being carried on till the end of the year, and the whole amount made by each scholar being given to him in some useful form. Thus many a lad will be enabled to

form the nucleus of a good library out of his earnings, a library that may be of immense value both to him and to his home. This is not mere theory. I know of one Wesleyan Band of Hope, in a poor neighbourhood, that sold last year more than 40,000 books and periodicals. Now, who can tell the advantage of such a spread of pure literature—advantages not only to the scholars, but also to the school, the purchaser, and society at large? The fact is, that such an organization would at once turn the whole army of Sunday scholars into colporteurs and home missionaries, and so produce a mighty effect on the population around.

It will also be of great benefit to the young people themselves. It will not only shield them from the terrible drink curse, but will protect them from a large number of dangerous companions. Young men who like the glass, will not want abstainers for their companions, and thus, in the nature of things, the abstainer will escape a fearful peril. It will also do much to develop the moral courage of the members. It is a most humiliating fact that a large number of people are very defective in this respect; especially in matters pertaining to morality and religion. They are governed by feeling, policy, convenience, ease, or worldly interest, rather than by principle. They are therefore, to a large extent, the creatures of circumstances. They can never say "Yes" or "No" on the real merits of a question. They always "Think so too." They neither row nor steer, but drift, and are at the mercy of every wind that blows. Whatever Church or party comes to the front attracts them, like so many particles of dead matter. If they go to a town where Methodism is strong and influential, they take a seat at the Methodist chapel; but if they go to another town where Methodism is weak and poor, they pass by on the other side. Now, this organization, well worked, will do much to remedy this miserable state of things. It will teach the young people to judge, discriminate, decide, and act upon their decision. It may seem

to be a little thing for a boy or girl to say "No" when asked to take a glass of wine, but it will have a mighty influence upon the future character and history of that child. Having said "No" in the face of example and custom, and against strong pressure, once, will enable him to say "No" to other temptations, and under other circumstances. It is the first step in a path that will often be steep and rugged, but a path that leads to glory and honour. It is to the child a battle which, ending in victory, will nerve him for future conflicts, and will do something towards placing him at last among those who, having overcome, shall inherit all things.

This most desirable object will not be accomplished without opposition and difficulty. Some hoary prejudices will stand in the way, and early-formed habits will sorely hamper some whose co-operation is most desirable; but the object contemplated is so immense, so important, and so pressing, that it ought to be earnestly and prayerfully attempted at once. Christian men have but to understand the fearful peril to which the children are exposed, in order to be prepared to make a sacrifice—ay, even a great sacrifice—in order to preserve them from ruin. Selfishness and Christianity are diametrically opposed. We are not to live to ourselves. We are our children's keepers.

Methodism has publicly declared that "it should be the rule of our lives to take no step where the weak brother may not safely follow." There are but two paths open to the children—one is the broad, winding, indefinite, path of moderation, the path by which every drunkard reached the way of darkness, and despair; and the plain, clear, safe, path of total abstinence. The children—with faith in our wisdom, and love beaming from every face—ask us, as individuals, and as Churches, "Which way shall we take?" Surely, surely we shall not hesitate; but, taking them by the hand, shall lead them to the path of total abstinence, and say by our words, and our lives, "This is the way, walk ye in it."

XXI.

THE SUNDAY DRINK TRAFFIC.¹

THE subject allotted to me by the Committee which has summoned this Conference is, "The Influence of the Sunday Traffic in Strong Drink on our Sunday Schools." I heartily wish that the Committee had selected some one to prepare this paper who could have given more time to its preparation. What, however, I have been able to do, in the midst of multiplied occupations, I have done willingly; and I am cheered by the remembrance that the paper is not designed to exhaust the subject, but only to provide the text, and give the outline, of the sermon which the Conference itself will preach.

My subject brings before us two of the mightiest agencies in operation in this country—agencies which every patriot should try to estimate, and understand.

First, we have the Sunday school, with its 600,000 teachers, and between three and four millions of children. An agency so vast, and so blessed, that it has well been called "England's glory."

Then, second, we have the drink traffic—a system vaster, and more influential, than the other. When we remember that besides those shops where drink is sold occasionally, there are 150,599 houses employed solely for this traffic, and that allowing a frontage of thirty feet to each house, they would reach, if put side by side, over 900

¹ A Paper read at a Conference of Sunday-school Teachers, held in the Town Hall, Manchester. The Bishop of Manchester in the chair.

miles, or form a street, with houses on both sides, the whole length of England, from Berwick-upon-Tweed to Land's End, in Cornwall; that 600,000 persons are employed therein; and that their yearly receipts amount to one hundred and twelve millions, we shall see that such a vast system as this, cannot exist without exerting immense influence upon the country. Indeed, I don't hesitate to say that there is not an interest, nor an individual, in the land but is affected by it in some way or other.

These two mighty agencies are in operation every Sunday, and it is upon their influence upon each other we are called to look. Do they work in harmony like the Church and the Sunday school? Alas, no! On the authority of Mr. Buxton we may say that they serve two masters—two masters that cannot be reconciled even by an Act of Parliament.

Mr. Buxton says that the school is the representation of heaven, and the public-house of hell; and hence it follows that the prosperity of one will be the ruin of the other, and that either the school must shut up the drink-shop or the drink-shop will put down the Sunday school.

How, then, does the Sunday traffic in strong drink affect the Sunday school?

In the first place, it prevents a large number of the children from entering the school. Professor Rogers says that there are two and a half millions of children who greatly need the influence of Sunday schools that never enter them. This is a matter of interest to us all, for two millions of children cannot grow up strangers to all religious influences, without materially affecting the future destiny of our country. Why, then, are they absent? I think all of us who have gone directly to the parents for information, shall agree that the two great reasons are the want of clothes, and the indifference of the parents. How, then, does it arise that there are so many of our children unclad?

How is it that England, while clothing all the world, cannot clothe her own children? Certainly not from want of means; for while the working-men of our country can spend fifty millions per annum on strong drink, and their Sunday drink bill amounts to fifteen millions, nobody will attempt to say that it is out of their power to purchase clothes for their children. Indeed, as a rule, we shall not find this destitution except where wages are high! The agricultural labourers, with ten shillings per week, clothe their children, and send them to school. It is the artisan, earning from twenty to fifty shillings per week, whose children are unclad! and the reason in nine hundred and ninety-nine cases, out of every thousand, is that the money which should have been spent on clothes for the children, is spent on the Saturday night, and Sunday, in the drink-shop. If evidence of this is wanting, I can supply it to any extent.

I know a school at which a boy attended, so poorly clad, that the teacher, when the winter came, made a collection among his friends, and bought him a warm suit; in a few Sundays he was absent, and on the teacher visiting the lad, he told him, with tears, that his mother waited for him to come from his employers on a Saturday night, that she might take his wages to the public-house, and that she had pawned the suit which had been given him, and had spent the money in drink. The teacher, pitying the boy, obtained another suit, and he went every Sunday morning to his teacher's house to put on his good clothes, and then on the Sunday night, he returned, and took them off at the same place, and resumed his week-day dress, and was thus protected against his own mother!

I could also take you to-day to a room in our own city, where five little children are huddled together, without a particle of clothing on them, and yet the father is in regular work, and receiving thirty-five shillings per week.

A large employer of skilled labour in Yorkshire told me last week, that his men spent on an average twenty shillings in drink every Saturday night, and Sunday; and one of the largest employers of labour in this neighbourhood tells me that not one-tenth of his men are at their work on the Monday morning.

With these facts before us, no wonder that the late Canon Stowell has said that the Sunday traffic turns the Lord's day into a day for the devil, and that it was a question whether many of the working-men would not be better without a Sunday at all. Indeed, I know that thousands of the women of England dread the approach of Sunday, because of the intemperance of their husbands, and sons; while the employers of labour regard the recurrence of that day as one of their greatest difficulties.

Then there is the second reason for the absence of children — the indifference on the part of the parents. What is the cause of this? As a rule the working-men of England have strong home feelings, and an ardent love for their children. How is it then that they have so degenerated, that the interests of their children are, in many cases, altogether neglected, and that a law has been necessary to enable society to compel them to have them educated? The answer was given the other day at Halifax by Mr. Goschen, when he said, "Drink so degrades the mental tastes, and perception, and so steels the heart, that the education of the children is sacrificed to the sensual appetites of the parents."

In proof that this is correct, I don't hesitate to say that, after years of close intercourse with the working-men of this country, I am certain the compulsory power will never be brought to bear upon an abstainer. Two men shall live in the same street, and work at the same shop, and earn the same wages, and while the children of the one are ragged, and neglected, the children of the other will be well clad,

and at school, and the explanation of the difference will be, that one of them is a drinker, and the other an abstainer.

Secondly, the Sunday traffic in strong drink counteracts the labours of the teachers on the children who attend the Sunday school. The first requirement of the Sunday school is, that the children be punctual, neat, and orderly. This is almost impossible to children of drunkards. Their clothes will not be prepared, their bodies will be unwashed, and their meals not ready. Hence many a sensitive child keeps away, and of those who come, the majority are dirty, and disorderly, and altogether unfit to receive the instruction of the teachers.

Then, again, the teachers seek to lead them to honour their parents; but how can they do this, when they see the selfishness, sensuality, and cruelty of those parents? Who can reverence a drunken father, or love a drunken, blaspheming mother?

Especially, the Sunday-school teacher aims to lead the children to obey God in all things. His text-book is the Bible; this he teaches them to regard as God's revealed will, and the Ten Commandments he puts before them as the great rule of life. But how is the teacher likely to succeed in this, when the highest authority in the land sets aside God's revealed will, and teaches, in the most practical way, that the Sabbath need not be kept holy?

In the school, the child has been taught to reverence God's holy day, and then, on leaving the school, he sees open, at every corner, shops from which he never sees his father come without terror, nor his mother without shame! The very foundation on which the teacher is attempting to build a system of morals, is thus destroyed, and we need not wonder if the result is a perfect wreck of morality.

Children are very quick at seeing inconsistencies, and they say, "If we have no clothes, or shoes, or food, the law says

it is wrong to buy them ; but if father and mother want to take the money that should buy these things and spend it on drink, which will make them swear and fight, it is right. Teacher says it is wicked to buy sweets, and oranges, on a Sunday, but the Parliament says it is right to spend the same money, on the same day, in beer or gin ! Parliament says it is wrong for Jews, who have strictly spent one day as a Sabbath, to work on the Sunday to get bread for their children, but that it is right for drink-sellers, who have never had a holy day, to open their shops on the Sunday to take the money from our parents that should buy us bread." My lord, in the presence of such a vast system, teaching doctrines like these, how can the Sunday-school teacher hope to train up the children in the way in which they should go ?

And the proposal of some of our friends that these shops should only be opened two hours in the day, from twelve till one, and from eight till nine, while doubtless a great boon to the country, would not relieve the Sunday-school teacher of his difficulties on this point. Indeed, I am not sure but it would increase them.

If these shops are open, somebody will have to go to them to buy the drink ; and, as a rule, those who buy drink on Sundays do not keep servants, the children will have to be sent, and what a mockery it will be to teach them to "Remember the Sabbath-day to keep it holy," and train them to cry, "Lord, have mercy upon us, and incline our hearts to keep this law !" The fact is, consistency demands that we should alter it. I saw in an American paper that, at a State meeting the other day, some speaker proposed a resolution to the effect that, in the opinion of this meeting, the Ten Commandments are obsolete, and should now be set aside. And if this Sunday drink selling is to remain as a part of the law of England, even for two hours, consistency demands that some member

of either Convocation, or Parliament, should propose that the Fourth Commandment should be brought into harmony with our law, and that it should say, "Remember the Sabbath-day to keep it holy, except from twelve till one, and from eight till nine!" As it is, the school says "one thing, and the public-house the opposite, and as the scholars can't believe both, one of them must be silenced.

Thirdly, the Sunday traffic in strong drink destroys a vast number of the scholars who pass through our Sunday-schools. Professor Huxley says that our educational ladder should have its foot in the gutter, and its top in the university. We, as Sunday-school teachers, say, that our ladder should have its foot in the home, and its top in heaven. That the children should be cared for by Christian parents in infancy, should enter the school, pass through it into the church militant, and so on to the church triumphant. But is it so? Alas, no! The most sanguine friend of Sunday schools will have to acknowledge, that the results of Sunday-school teaching have been far below his expectation.

The East London Auxiliary Sunday-school Union says, in one of its reports, "Our beloved schools are retrograding. We fail to retain the affections of our elder scholars;" and it goes on to say, "an inquiry into the causes of this comparative failure is most imperatively demanded. The axe must be laid at the root of every tree that spreads its deadly shade over our beloved institution."

Let us see if we can find the reason of this admitted failure; and I think it will not be long to seek. The tree of which the report speaks, which so throws its deadly shade over our Sunday schools that we gather so little of the ripened fruit, is the drink traffic, especially on the Sunday.

See how it lowers the tone of public opinion as to the Sunday. When we remember that at least 130,000 of

these drink-shops are opened on the Sunday, and this is leaving 40,000 as being closed in Scotland by the Forbes Mackenzie Act, and in Ireland by the personal influence of the Catholic bishops, together with some which are voluntarily closed in England; you will have over two millions of habitual Sabbath breakers! Under this gigantic influence, you have also a host of other shops for the sale of tobacco, newspapers, sweetmeats, fruit, etc., supplying at least another million. These destroy the sanctity of the Sabbath, and practically teach the children to set it at naught, and so our hopes are blighted, and their ruin sealed.

When we remember that there are 18,000 of these drink-shops in Lancashire, and 3300 in Manchester and Salford, and when I tell you that into ten of these there entered last Sunday 5928 men, 3009 women, 890 children, giving an average of 982 persons to each house, or over 100 per hour, who can wonder that those of us who are labouring to save the children of our country have to cry—"I have laboured in vain, and spent my strength for naught"?

If evidence is wanted to show the disastrous effects of the traffic on the schools, take a fact or two:—

The superintendent of a Sunday school says: "Our select class of young men used to smell so strongly of drink in the afternoon, that it was sickening to teach it, and nothing could be done till we had expelled the incorrigible, and formed a Band of Hope to save the rest. Since then, several of the young men have joined the Church."

Rev. E. Jackson, incumbent of St. James', Leeds, says he believes half of the scholars lost to his school, are drawn away through the influence of the Sunday traffic in strong drink.

The late Rev. James Sherman says: "Of the thousands of children which have passed through my schools, very few of them have become members of the Church, and drink is the principal cause of their ruin."

An Independent minister, in a paper read before the World's Temperance Convention, says: "More than 3000 children have passed through my school, and not one in fifty is making a creditable profession of Christianity, and the principal cause is drink."

A Sunday-school teacher says: "The opening of a tea-garden, connected with a public-house near our school, on the Sunday, entirely destroyed the select class of seventeen young men."

Another teacher says: "I have just found that four of the most promising boys in my class spend their Sunday evening at the public-house."

A missionary in Hull says: "The other Sunday evening I went into a public-house, and found three young men from the Sunday school sitting with three girls from the same school."

I might go on with this sad monotony of evidence to prove my position, but knowing that every teacher will have long since been satisfied of its truth from his own experience, I refrain.

I have, then, I think, proved that the Sunday traffic in strong drink is most injurious to the Sunday school, and I now ask, Why is it permitted to continue? Is it that the article sold is so beneficial? or that the shops in which it is sold are such centres of light and purity? or that the men who dispense it are so intelligent, and virtuous, that we are bound to make an exception in their favour? To each of these questions, the national answer is "No."

Is it, then, that a majority of the people demand that they should be open? To this I answer "No." The majority, the immense majority, of the people are in favour of their being closed. Am I told that there are cases where the majority is in the wrong, and the minority in the right, and that a wise and patriotic statesman will be guided more by the opinion of an intelligent minority, than by that of an

ignorant majority? I know it. But in this case not only does the majority ask that these houses should be shut, but in that majority you have the industry, intelligence, and virtue of the land. In this struggle, it is the publicans, and sinners, *versus* the patriots, and Christians; the avaricious, ignorant, and the sensual, *versus* the generous, the intelligent, and good.

If, then, this evil is condemned by God's Law,—by the principles of our national constitution, and by the will of the people,—I ask, with earnest iteration, Why is it permitted to continue? I believe the true answer is, because of the ignorance, and apathy, of the Christian Church. By God's grace, the Church has become so strong in this country, that there is no evil existing within it, which, if she would but unite, and put forth her strength, she cannot sweep away; and the people know this, and hold her responsible for their continuance. Especially is it so in this case. Take a case or two in proof.

A minister of my own Church spoke one Sunday evening to a drunken man, and remonstrated with him. He replied, "I know I'm wrong; when I leave home in the morning, I do not intend to get drunk, but the public-houses are open. I get past one or two, but they are too many for me; I go in, and then it is all over with me." And then, with the energy of deep feeling, he said, "If the great folk want to keep us poor folk sober, they should shut up the traps that catch us." And this is the common feeling of the working-men.

Hear, also, the taunt of a leading infidel to the same effect. He says: "The working-men are cursed by these open hell-holes; they don't want them; they know that hundreds and thousands of their fellows are ruined by them: but they are powerless to close them. The guilty parties are the Scribes and the Pharisees. They have the power, but won't use it. They say, 'If you will not be saved in

our way, go the other way, and be damned.' They are the great upholders of the drinking-system. They know that there are more crimes committed, more visits to infernal places, more diseases contracted, more money lost, more ruin caused on Sundays than on all the other days of the week, but what care they?"

I spoke to a policeman on Sunday last, and after hearing evidence from his lips as to the evils which the Sunday traffic produced, I expressed my regret that it should exist, when he replied, "Well, I think nobody is to blame but you Christians: if you liked, you could make mincemeat of it this session."

Fellow-workers, shall this state of things continue? Is it nothing to you that God is insulted, the Church dishonoured, our country disgraced, and multitudes of souls destroyed?

In thunder tones I would cry, "Awake, awake; put on thy strength, O Zion; put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, and come to the help of the Lord; to the help of the Lord against the mighty."

Let the army of God listen to her Commander's call, and use its wealth, its learning, its social influence, and its political power for Him. Let us, as believers, serve not political parties, but "the Lord Christ." Let us, as members of Christ's one Church, be united in this matter, and tell our legislators that we will not allow this evil to continue. That we will not have Sabbath broken by Act of Parliament. Let a petition go from every church, and school, in the land, and, ere this session ends, the plague will be stayed.

**THE INFLUENCE OF THE DRINKING CUSTOMS
UPON THE WORK OF THE CHRISTIAN
CHURCH.¹**

THE great purpose for which we have met together is to look at our national intemperance—to ascertain its causes, and seek after a remedy. We cannot go far with these inquiries, without discovering that among the many causes that exist, not one can for a moment be compared to the drinking customs of society. They have been called the parents of intemperance, and it would be easy to show that they well deserve the name.

"Custom," it is said, "is the law of fools." I fear, however, that its dominion extends to many to whom that term will not apply. Bishop Potter has said that it is the most absolute, and powerful, of monarchs; and it certainly is, for it reaches everything belonging to us. It tells us where we shall live, what we shall wear, and what we shall eat, drink, and avoid; while rebellion is visited with summary, and most severe, punishment.

It is a tyrant everywhere; but nowhere is its tyranny more injuriously employed than in connection with strong drink. It was a master-stroke of policy on the part of the enemy of souls, to persuade the Saxon race to select drink as the symbol of everything generous and good. Alas! for us, his success has been most complete. Professor Miller says

¹ A Paper read at a Ministerial Conference held in the Free Trade Hall, Manchester.

that Britons have the idea that nothing is done well unless it is associated with strong drink, and it is so. If we marry, we must drink; if we baptise our children, we must drink; if we bury our dead, we must drink; if we receive friends, we must drink; if we mourn, we must drink; if we rejoice, we must drink; if we part with friends, we must drink; if we do business, we must drink; if we show hospitality, we must drink; if we manifest our loyalty, we must drink; if we prove our devotion, we must drink. As George Cruickshank has so graphically shown in his wonderfully natural picture, "The Bottle"—drink meets us at the cradle, and follows us to the grave.

Such a widespread, and minute, agency as this, cannot exist without exerting an immense influence on us; and I want to show you that, bad as that influence is on our social life, and business habits, it is still more injurious in its bearings on the Christian Church.

In order to see this, we must look at the work which the Church has to perform; and I know not that I can better describe this work than in the words of the late Dr. Arnold: "It is her mission to make earth like heaven, and every man like God." She is to be the sworn enemy of all that is evil, and the earnest friend of all that is good.

With this work the drinking customs seriously interfere.

First, these customs greatly limit the Church's pecuniary resources. The Church's wealth, like all her other talents, is entrusted to her to be employed according to her Master's will. She is but a steward, and it is expected of stewards that they be found faithful. Every Christian, therefore, should form habits of economy and generosity—economy in his expenditure on himself, and generosity in the service of God. Now the drinking customs involve a large expenditure, and develop and strengthen habits of extravagance; and under their influence the decanter and barrel are often kept full, while the treasury of God is allowed

to remain empty. Many a professing Christian would be covered with shame, if he were compelled to announce to the Church the amount he spends on strong drink, and the amount he gives to the cause of God; and he would rather burn his wine merchant's bill than show it to the Saviour. We have but to remember that the average amount given to missions by the people of this country is only one shilling per head, while we spend ninety shillings per annum on strong drink; in other words we give the shillings to Christ, and the pounds to Bacchus.

Secondly, these customs seriously interfere with the work of the Church. They interfere with our work as ministers, keeping vast numbers beyond our reach, and frustrating our efforts upon those who do come. Thousands of our hearers have, while in the house of God, been almost persuaded to become Christians; but they have been met at home by these terrible customs, and their goodness has been as the morning cloud, and the early dew.

It also seriously interferes with the work of the Sunday-school teacher, taking the good seed out of the hearts of scholars, and turning their very privileges into curses. One young man says, "Of the seventeen who were scholars with me, twelve I know to be drunkards, and if Sunday-school superintendents knew how drink frustrates their efforts they would avoid it for ever."

It is so with Home Mission work. It is so with Tract Distribution, and all similar agencies. As the governor of Edinburgh Prison has well said, "You may build a church in every street, and make your religious organizations as complete as you will; but as long as you allow the dram-shops to be open, you will make criminals, faster than you can reclaim them."

It is especially so with Missions to the heathen; their nature seems to be peculiarly susceptible of alcoholic influence, and as soon as this fiery liquid has been intro-

duced amongst them, it has spread sin, and sorrow, all around. Missionaries from all lands agree that the introduction of our drinking customs among their people has been a great calamity. Dr. Livingstone says, "They ruin both the body and soul of Africans." And Dr. Scudder, the celebrated Indian missionary, when delivering a charge, at the ordination of his son, said, "I would not allow a heathen to see me take a glass of wine for a kingdom."

I might multiply evidence on all these subjects, but I think I have said enough to show that these customs do greatly hinder the work of the Church.

Thirdly, these customs inflict great injury on the Church herself.

They lower the tone of her spirituality. An aged Christian has remarked that if a man, had a particle of depravity in his nature, a glass of brandy would fud it out; and this remark is borne out by the experience of thousands. It is notorious that as the glass circulates, the conversation becomes less spiritual, and foolish talking, and jesting, often takes the place of conversation ministering to edifying. Complying with these customs also weakens the moral influence of the Church. Her example should be one, that all men could safely imitate. The young, the weak, the ignorant, should be able to tread in her steps, and feel secure. She is not to live for herself, but for others. She should be willing to make any personal sacrifice rather than that those around her should suffer. It is her joy to know that she is her "brother's keeper." It is true that she is freed from ceremonial thralldom, but she is to be careful that her liberty does not become a stumbling-block to them that are weak.

Now, the drinking customs we know are full of danger to many. To the young, who may be thereby ensnared; to the weak, who may be thereby cast down; and to the reclaimed, who may thereby be again brought back into

bondage. By conforming to these customs we may therefore destroy him for whom Christ died.

Lastly, these customs have robbed the Church of many of her most efficient members and ministers. Is there one of us that could not bear a mournful testimony to the truth of this? Have we not all seen members, once sober as ourselves, who have conformed to the customs till they have formed habits which they could not conquer, and tied, and bound, with the chain of their sins they have gone into eternity in darkness? The "priest and prophet" also have not escaped, and he that turned many to righteousness has gone out into a hopeless eternity. Our people wonder how this can be. With my knowledge I wonder how so many of us escape. Nowhere is alcohol so dangerous as in the brain of a minister. His mental, and physical, organization combine to make him peculiarly susceptible of its influence. The quantity that the *deacon* can take with impunity, will often drive the *minister* to madness.

These customs beset us as they do not our people. Our visits are all special, and are therefore all the signals for the production of the drink, and the more popular the minister, the more frequent, and strong, the temptations. If we pay pastoral visits, at every house the drink is pressed upon us. If we go to the wedding, the baptism, or the funeral, it is still there. It is often, too, pressed upon us most unreasonably. Sometimes by those of whom we may say, "They know not what they do." Sometimes, I am sorry to say, by those who do know what they do, and who put their bottle to their minister that they may triumph in his shame. I have known men who have pressed the wine upon their minister, and counted the glasses that he took, and who have ordered the servant to put a certain decanter near the minister, and see that no one else drank from it, that they might know how much he drank, and who, when reason has been blinded, and the tongue loosened, have

treasured up the unwise words that were spoken, and used them for his ruin! These men I leave with their God; but, if murder is to be punished, they will not escape. I need say no more, but repeat that in my opinion the drinking customs of society are more dangerous to ministers than to any other class of men. Here, then, is my case. The Church has an all-important work to do, and the drinking customs of society are among her chief hindrances. What, then, is our duty? I say to you, my brethren, what a famous General is reported to have said to his troops on the morning of a battle, "Comrades! there are our enemies; if you don't beat them, they will beat you."

Am I asked How this is to be done? I answer, By regarding these customs as enemies, and resolving never to submit to them again. In this matter let us all become sturdy Nonconformists, and it will be a glorious beginning to a still more glorious end. If, in addition to this, we could but agree that, for our own protection, and for the sake of others, we will henceforth banish strong drink from amongst the luxuries, and place it amongst the medicines, we should begin an era of social, commercial, and spiritual prosperity such as our land has never seen.

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